NO FATIGUE 2

～24時間戦える男の転生譚～



天宮暁

蒲

OVER LAP

No Fatigue - 24 Jikan Tatakaeru Otoko no Tenseitan

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1. Prologue

NO FATIGUE The Tale of the Man Who Could Fight for 24 Hours

Thank you for taking an interest in『NO FATIGUE The Tale of the Man Who Could Fight for 24 Hours』this time.
I thought to write this story by putting importance on the tempo and exhilaration of the story.
There may be parts that weren't of my full capability, but I hope you continue associating with this story for many chapters to come.

※ For those who think 'Prologues are tedious, get to the story already!' I've prepared a 'prologue of NO FATIGUE you can understand in 3 lines' in the postscript.
Those of you who feel that way, please briefly scroll through and look at the postscript.

With that said, please enjoy『NO FATIGUE The Tale of the Man Who Could Fight for 24 Hours』!

T/N: Both the prescript (is that a word?) and postscript are translations of what the author has written.

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1. Prologue

When I exited the Game Centre, I heard a scream.

In front of my eyes, there was a man in a black jersey on the street opposite.

The man was chasing an office worker who was fleeing after being stabbed in the shoulder, and stabbed that fleeing back with the blood-stained knife in his hand.

The man stabbed the office worker another 2, 3 times, ignoring his screams.

Losing interest in the office worker when he fell limp, the man starts searching for his next prey.

What caught his attention was a female high school student who had collapsed in shock and couldn't move after witnessing the sudden homicide.

The man ran towards the female student.

The female student tried to run but the man seized her arm before she could stand up.

The man's broad grin made the female student feel short of breath.

Splattered in blood, the man raises his arm overhead.

I dashed from across the road and clung to the arm.

I don’t know if it was because of the situation, but I kept my head cool as I carefully observe the man’s appearance.

He was around my age, maybe a little older, but I suppose he was in his thirties.
He had a slender face covered with stubble, but the bloodshot eyes and inflated nostrils gave it a strange intensity.

I tried to pin down the man’s arm one way or another, but the man shook me off and retrieved a new knife from his belt.
When I looked at it, I saw various-sized knives hanging from the man’s belt.

I reposition my backpack to block the knife swinging down at me and then ram into the man, backpack and all.

However, the man dodged, circumventing my body blow, and slashed with his knife.

Blood sprays out from my arm.

My consciousness recedes due to the pain and by the time I recovered, a knife had been pierced into my stomach.

“This…..!”

Anger erupted in me, along with the pain.

I swing my backpack around recklessly.
I felt the backpack collide with something solid as it hit the slasher’s head.
Inside the backpack was a sturdy ArcCon (Arcade Controller).

I grapple with the man, who was groaning with pain, and try to snatch the knife from his hand.

I almost managed to take the knife from him somehow, but it was at that moment.

The female student, who had sunk down to the floor, suddenly grabbed at the man.

I think she might have been trying to help me, but that’s when misfortune struck.

“….gubu..”

A sensation I had never experienced before transmitted through my arm.

The man collapses onto the ground with his eyes wide open as he mutters something.

In a daze, I looked at my hand.

There’s blood.

It’s a knife.

A blood-stained knife was clasped in my hand.

……In other words.

I… stabbed him?
"C-criminal discovered!"
While I was frozen in shock, a pair of police officers appeared from the roadside.

"The criminal is wearing a black jersey and is a slender man in his thirties— It is confirmed!"

I look down at my torso.

I was wearing a black jersey.

Moreover, I was certainly in my thirties and had a slender build.

"W-wait a moment…! I am….!"

I swung my arms in front of me without thinking as I called out to the police officers.

However,

"H-he's resisting!"

"Y-you're mistaken…. I'm not the slasher…."

"Then what's that in your hand!"

Hearing that remark, I check my hand.

Yeah, this is a knife.

And furthermore, it was dyed red with the blood of the criminal I had just stabbed.

It was hard to deny it with this circumstantial evidence, and I became flustered.

I was stunned.

And then of all things,

"H-hey… J-j-just wait a moment, I am……!"

Stuttering intensely, I tried to run over to the police officers.

Of course, this happened to be while I was still waving the bloody knife in my hand…..

I must admit that I should have been more composed somehow.

"D-don't come any closer…!"

The police officer warned, holding his gun out.

I was enraged, but I also came to my senses after seeing the senior police officer's stern expression and the muzzle pointing at me.

However.

"Eep, uwahhh!"

This time, the younger police officer panicked.

"O-oi.. stop it….!"

The senior police officer's restraining was to no avail either, as the young police officer pulled the trigger.

And it wasn't just once, but many times.

Bang, bang, bang, the sounds reverberated as the bullets penetrated through my abdomen.

Together with the last of these sounds, a scorching heat travelled through my chest.

My head turned blank from the excessive shock.

And then, my vision darkens.

Within my narrowing field of vision, I saw the senior police officer pin down the young police officer.

With that as the last scene I witnessed, I collapsed onto the ground and lost all sight.

"T-this is…. too much, right…."

My lungs haemorrhaged after muttering that.

Thus, my life came to an end.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

"…..Certainly, this was a bit much."

"Wh— wah..owa..uaaahh!"

I think I heard a woman's voice but I was in no mind for that.

I don't know how it became like this but suddenly, the world was at my feet.

…….

Sorry, that was poorly worded.

To put it simply, I was in the sky, gazing down at the world from a distance.

Look, there's footage of 'the world from the perspective of an International Space Station', right?
Like that, I was floating on a satellite orbit with blue oceans, reddish-brown land covered by clouds, and green forests spread around below me; that was the situation I was in.

"I-I.. I'm falling……!"

"Calm down. You're not falling."

I realised after I was told this.
Indeed, I was high in the sky, so high that even the air seemed non-existent, but there was no sign of me falling towards the earth.

"Ah, yeah…. You're right."

I understood that I was safe for the time being (although I didn't know a single thing apart from that), and I finally had the composure to observe my surroundings.

First, the woman in front of me.

Well, how should I put it, it was…

"A goddess?"

I think an apt description would be the image of Venus, from Greek mythology.
She was an inconceivable beauty, with a magnificent body covered modestly with a fabric that resembled white silk.

The difference was that her hair wasn't blond like Venus', but closer to black.

"Yes. That's right."

With an enchanting smile, the goddess(?) spoke.

"….Yeah, well, I kind of understand."

I sigh as I say this.

"Oh? About what?"

"To sum it up: you're a god, I died in my previous world, and right now there's an **unfamiliar planet** below me. Thus, this is about reincarnation."

I thought it was the Earth at first, but this planet doesn't seem like Earth.

There were huge desert continents at random, red hurricane-like clouds, and islands floating in the sky. No matter how I looked at it, this wasn't Earth.

"……Well, that's the gist of it."

The goddess smiles again and starts to explain.

"Just like you just said, you died. Mistaken for the slasher, you were shot by police…… Ah, you don't have to be worried about your reputation after you died. The girl you tried to save was there, right? Thanks to her testimony, the media reported that you weren't a random slasher; you were just a third-party who tried to subdue the slasher."

"…That's good."

I was just a corpse with no relatives anyway, so it doesn't bother me even if I had been treated as the slasher but as expected, I guess it seemed off-putting.

"Well, it seems like the police filed charges against you, saying you died as the suspect for the murder of the slasher. There was a riot when they said the police shot you by mistake."

"Serves them right."

So I said, but as the one who ended up dying, I do feel a little unsettled with only the dismissal of a few police executives.

"Well, it can't be helped. No, maybe something could have been done, but that's life. Since I get to live a second time, I should just forget the slasher and the stupid police."

"Right…… But there's something I'd like to say about that. I have some bad news."

"Bad news?"

"Yes. That slasher has been reincarnated in the world you'll be going to."

"Huh!?"

"More than that, I want you to defeat the slasher. That's the reason I'm offering you a chance to reincarnate this time."

"Why do I have to…."

I had been absorbed in rushing out back then, but what was I thinking, leaping at a slasher who was holding a knife.

Anyway, now that I've cooled off, I don't want to fight him a second time, nor do I feel up to it.

"I understand your feelings but I'm just as pressured as well. The aforementioned slasher—he's called Kizaki Tooru; he was summoned by a wicked sorcerer working for an evil god, and has been reincarnated in the body of the baby girl used as a sacrifice."

"Why can't you let the humans of that world deal with him?"

“The rules of this world states that gods cannot interfere with the material world. An exception to that, or rather, an underhanded trick is to reincarnate someone like what I’m doing now. In times of emergency, such as a crisis approaching the world or intervention from another world, the gods will attempt to resolve the situation by reincarnating a soul they choose personally like this.”

“Is that guy…. that dangerous? He wasn’t just a petty slasher?”

“That slasher isn’t an ordinary slasher. He has been influenced by Monguenues — the evil god who reincarnated him — and the number of people he has killed in your country exceeds one hundred.”

“O-one hundred!?

If that’s true, his cutthroat homicide would be at the world-record level.

…..I did a really good thing.

“It seems that the slashing homicide was a death ritual dedicated to Monguenues. You managed to stop him, but he just managed to accomplish his greatest desire and reincarnated in this world.”

“……Tch, so I was too late.”

In the end, I wasn’t rewarded for fighting with my life on the line.

“No, what you did was not in vain. Kizaki Tooru’s ritual was interrupted because of you. Thanks to that, Kizaki did not gain a complete body and was only able to reincarnate in this world by possessing an infant’s body.”

So it wasn’t completely useless.

“Thanks to that, we have some temporary leeway until Kizaki Tooru grows to adulthood. In that time, you will—”

“Locate and kill him, huh.”

I gave a small nod.

This goddess is unable to directly intervene in the happenings on the surface.
This is why she is trying to reincarnate me, to somehow do away with the slashing murderer, Kizaki Tooru, who reincarnated in this world through the evil god’s schemes.

“……I understand what I have to do. However, I’m not a soldier or martial artist or anything. I don’t have any combat power.”

I liked fighting games, but games and actual combat were completely different things.
I had never actually fought anyone prior to the fight with that slasher.

“Of course, I will grant you power. That said, I can’t give you that much power since I am exploiting this reincarnation after all.”

“Hey, hey, isn’t the other party a dangerous character who was reincarnated by the evil god?”

“What I’m giving you is a Soul Seed, so to speak. If you give it water and fertilizer and raise it, I’m sure you will obtain the power to oppose the evil god’s apostle.

And then the goddess continues.

“You have your mission to do away with that slasher — the apostle of the evil god — somehow, but I don’t mind if you live as you wish aside from that. If you make the best of my power, so to speak……yes, I believe the [Cheater’s] way of life is possible.

Cheater. In other words, playing the game with an extreme and advantageous condition omitted by the game system.

That was the remuneration for accepting this goddess’s request.
Considering my death, it certainly wasn’t bad.
I would like to decline having the slasher as my opponent at all costs, but to challenge him with a clear cheat is still preferable.

…Well, I guess it’s not bad. This opportunity to reincarnate into the real world, I probably won’t have a second chance if I miss it.

“…I get it. The reason I died was also that guy’s fault to begin with. I’ll take a shot at what I can.”

Besides, although the goddess didn’t say so explicitly, I didn’t have the choice to refuse after dying in my original world.

The goddess cast her eyes down apologetically and spoke.

“Thank you. I am the goddess who governs the transmigration of souls, Atrazenec. And this world spread out below, the name of the world you will be traversing from now is Marquekt.”

The goddess extends her hand to my cheek.

An ethereal, soft and dainty finger brushes my cheek gently.

While stroking my face as though ascertaining something, the goddess speaks.

“Hmm, I see. Perhaps that skill would be good for you. The skill has a bit of an edge, but it should suit your tastes perfectly.”

And then—

“I pledge. To bestow my divine protection unto the one who consents to fight the evil god. —Skill conferment【No Fatigue】”

With the words of the pledge came the feeling of the goddess’s moist lips on my cheek.

A tremendous heat permeates through my body, originating from the goddess’s lips.

“Uu….Gua…”

“…..It’s soon time to say farewell,”

the goddess says to me, who was crouched down holding my cheek.

My body could be seen slowly becoming transparent.

“The skill is something that belongs to this world, Marquekt. You, who acquired this skill, have partly become Marquekt’s. And according to the rules of Marquekt, gods cannot interfere with those on the surface. We cannot keep you in this place.”

As the goddess spoke, my body floated gently.

No, wrong…… This is falling!

I fell to Marquekt with an intense force while listening to the goddess’s final words.

“I can’t be said to have granted you this kind of fate but…… please take care of your life. You were brave for fighting against the slasher, but you were also reckless. I don’t wish for you to stake your life for the sake of my mission. Use that skill to survive — Kagi Tomonori.”

Prologue of NO FATIGUE you can understand in 3 lines

- The protagonist Kagi Tomonori was mistaken as a random slasher and shot dead by the police.
- When he realised, a goddess was there and he was able to reincarnate in another world with the condition that he pursue the random slasher who was reincarnated in the other world through an evil god’s intervention.
- He received the <No Fatigue> skill from the goddess.

TOC |

2. No Fatigue

And thus I, Kagi Tomonori, reincarnated in another world called Marquekt.

Thanks to having an explanation beforehand, I wasn't very surprised when I woke up to find myself surrounded by unfamiliar adults and that my body wouldn't move very well. When I looked at my arm, I saw that the arrangement? resulted in me becoming an infant.
At most, my astonishment was revised to 'Oh, so I really reincarnated!'

However, I was surprised by another matter.

It had to do with the [No Fatigue] skill I received from the goddess.

In this world, the first thing I realised was that the adults in the vicinity were my parents and after drinking from my mother's breasts, the day came to an end.

My mother (a woman who was still around twenty years of age, judging from the senses of my previous world) tried to rock me to sleep but——I didn't fall asleep at all.

In the beginning I briefly thought it was because I was nocturnal in my previous world, but my current body was a newborn infant.

Despite this, I wasn't the least drowsy.

I pretended to fall asleep before my mother when she was rocking me at least, but not a hint of drowsiness came, while the moon outside rose high into the sky.
While wonder what on earth it was, I vacantly gazed at the moon (it was dark so I couldn't see anything else well enough), when characters suddenly floated in my mind.

《Luranius (ルラヌス): the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt》

"Hogya-!?"

(Woah!?) was what I intended to say, but my vocal cords were still undeveloped so it turned into babble.

Flustered, I fell back onto the bed and look at my sleeping mother but my mother was asleep with her mouth partly open and seemed to be drooling while making a somewhat happy-looking face.
Being both a parent of mine, and a married woman, she had an unimaginable charm.

Calming down at her face, I calmly reassess the phenomenon from just now.

……Well, I didn't need to think about it.
It was probably an ability from the so-called [Appraisal] system.
In my previous life, I often read webnovels to pass the time on my commute to work.

I wasn't tired anyway, so I try out the [Appraisal?] I had acquired.

《Luranius: the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt》
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From what I can tell, I spent around two hours on this foolish operation.

《Luranius: the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt. Routinely faces Marquekt with the same side.》

It increased!!!

The information wasn't that helpful but the entry grew with no prior notice.

"Fu..hua..fuee..fhuaa……"

(Th-then if I continue this……)

Due to having an infant's body, every single action was slovenly, but I realised that this was a good opportunity.

And then,

《Luranius: the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt. Routinely faces Marquekt with the same side.》《Luranius: the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt. Routinely faces Marquekt with the same side.》《Luranius: the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt. Routinely faces Marquekt with the same side.》《Luranius: the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt. Routinely faces Marquekt with the same side.》《Luranius: the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt. Routinely faces Marquekt with the same side.》《Luranius: the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt. Routinely faces Marquekt with the same side.》

I continued to repeatedly use [Appraisal?] with increasing vigour.

And then, when the moon was disappearing by the window,

《Luranius: the moon orbiting the planet Marquekt. Routinely faces Marquekt with the same side. Orbital period is 24 days.》

"Fuoh!" (Ooh!)

The information increased once again.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

After the moon was hidden beyond the window, I was unable to use [Appraisal?] because the room was too dark.

Moreover, I didn't get tired no matter what.

While I was in anguish, the sky brightened.

If this was my old world, I would be starting to think there was something wrong with me, but regardless of the surging [Appraisal?] rush and insomnia, I was not excited or sleepy and just maintained a very normal condition.

I just had plenty of time to think, so I was able to come up with a realistic hypothesis regarding this situation.

Bluntly speaking, the hypothesis was as thus.

——Isn't this because of a skill?

The skill that I received from the goddess was called [No Fatigue].

In short, it means I won't get tired.
I won't tire, nor will I get drowsy.
And my physical condition (probably) won't deteriorate either.

It's still the first day so it's possible that I might feel sleepy at some point, but there are no signs of drowsiness at present.

Not getting sleepy was obvious, but the fact that I don't feel worn out after the barrage from [Appraisal?] after so many hours, or even lose interest, was also abnormal.
Even in my past life, I would forget the time when practicing combos for a fighting game, but there's no way I wouldn't get worn out after continuing for so many hours without rest.
I dare say, this 'won't tire', 'won't get tired of' result is probably part of this skill's effects as well.

To sum it all up, the [No Fatigue] skill's effects were: 'not tiring', 'not getting tired of', and 'not feeling tired'.
It's only just a hypothesis, but I think I can consider it as that.

Now then, how do I view this skill?

I suppose there are also people who would think, 'is that all?'

Indeed, compared to easily understood skills such as having an increased learning speed for martial arts or magic, or being able to appraise everything in society, or having a radar-like, mental map depicting the movements of people in a fixed range, this [No Fatigue] skill was…… how should I put it, rather 'subdued'.

But if it think very carefully, there might be huge potential sleeping behind this skill.

I'd like to think so.

Take sports for example.

Even a professional athlete, no, all the more for a professional athlete, they must condition

themselves and get plenty of rest when they are tired.
And when training the basics, the repetitive practice may steadily wear out their spirit. Fundamentally, even weight training and stretching are repetitive exercises filled with pain.

But with this [No Fatigue], they ‘won’t tire’ so rest is unnecessary, they ‘won’t tire of’ it so they can steadily continue basic training all day long, and they ‘won’t feel tired’ so they can designate 24 hours each day as practice time in its entirety.

Or perhaps for fighting games.

I could give many examples, but combo practice is a given. For instance, practicing an anti-air attack against opponents who flew, or practicing the transition for a two-sided or mid-low guard, or practicing an ultra-hit combo. It’s exceedingly straightforward but if it is possible then one can seriously continue practicing as much as they like, for as long as time allows.

Certainly, the fact that great effort is needed doesn’t change, but for that endeavour to be easily done—— no, it probably won’t be at that level.
It’s possible to become a practically superhuman practice machine.

There might also be people asking ‘You want to be like that?’, but I hoped that this delusion of expansive potential wouldn’t cease and that this abnormality of mine, who treated the discipline-like repetitive practice as a solace in my daily life, would be such a wonderful ability.

“Fuefuabi fuama.. Waiaho~!” (Goddess-sama, thank you!)

I shout out from the bottom of my heart——though it was in a baby voice.

---

3. The First Counter Stop

From that day, the endless days of training started.

First was [Appraisal?].

I tried using [Appraisal?] on myself from the outset.

《Edgar Chrebl (キュレベル): Viscount Chrebl's fourth son. Level: 1, HP: 4/4, MP: 6/6. Skills: [No Fatigue]ー, [Appraisal] 3. <Goddess of Virtue's Blessing>》

……First of all, I learnt that the 'Level System' and 'Skill System' exists in this world.
I also learnt that I have three elder brothers on top of that.
I also learnt that skills have levels as well.
Or rather, this is the first time I knew my name.

However,

"Fuanfua, winfuia." (It's kinda.. hard to read.)

The information display wasn't good. Couldn't I do something with the layout somehow?
I thought, as I used [Appraisal] (it was cleared up, so I removed the ?) once again.

《Edgar Chrebl (Viscount Chrebl's fourth son)

Level 1
HP 4/4
MP 6/6

Skills
[No Fatigue]ー
[Instant Interpreter]ー
[Appraisal] 3

<Goddess of Virtue's Blessing> 》

So I can do it if I try!
Well, the matter of which display layout is better depends on the situation though.

Many questions came to mind after seeing my own status, but I was still an infant anyway.
Since it's fine to gradually learn the language and general knowledge of this world, what I can do now is,

[Appraisal][Appraisal][Appraisal][Appraisal][Appraisal] ……

《Edgar Chrebl: Viscount Chrebl's fourth son. Level: 1, HP: 4/4, MP: 6/6. Skills: [No Fatigue]

—, [Appraisal] 3. <Goddess of Virtue's Blessing>》《Edgar Chrebl: Viscount Chrebl's fourth son. Level: 1, HP: 4/4, MP: 6/6. Skills: [No Fatigue]—, [Appraisal] 3. <Goddess of Virtue's Blessing>》《Edgar Chrebl: Viscount Chrebl's fourth son. Level: 1, HP: 4/4, MP: 6/6. Skills: [No Fatigue]—, [Appraisal] 3. <Goddess of Virtue's Blessing>》《Edgar Chrebl: Viscount Chrebl's fourth son. Level: 1, HP: 4/4, MP: 6/6. Skills: [No Fatigue]—, [Appraisal] 3. <Goddess of Virtue's Blessing>》《Edgar Chrebl: Viscount Chrebl's fourth son. Level: 1, HP: 4/4, MP: 6/6. Skills: [No Fatigue]—, [Appraisal] 3. <Goddess of Virtue's Blessing>》 ……

Well, it's to raise the level of [Appraisal] of course.

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And thus, the few days after my birth were somehow spent repeatedly using [Appraisal] behind my mother's back, who was looking after me.

Thanks to that, my [Appraisal] rose to level 9 four days after my birth, and it appeared to have reached the limit.

Incidentally, when I look at my status with [Appraisal] at level 9, it looks like this.
The important thing was, helpful information was also displayed

《Edgar Chrebl (Viscount Chrebl's fourth son| Noble of Santamana Kingdom)

Level 1
HP 4/4 (HP: the abstract conversion of one's life force into a numerical value. Current value/Maximum value. 10 is the standard value for an average level 1 male adult. It is rare for someone to die when HP remains, or to live despite having 0 HP, but it is possible. The maximum value can temporarily decrease due to injury, illness, or fatigue.)
MP 6/6 (MP: the abstract conversion of one's magical capacity into a numerical value. Current value/Maximum value. 10 is the standard value for an average level 1 male adult. One will faint when their MP reaches 0.)

Skills

• Mythical class (An unparalleled skill that can be first acquired through difficult methods such as conferment from a god or reconstructed from legend.)

[No Fatigue] - being released from all physical and mental fatigue.

[Instant Interpretation] - ability to understand Marquekt's primary language and communicate one's intentions, while insufficient. Only valid for speech. Effective: Until 3 years old. Can consciously switch ON/OFF.

• Legendary class (A rare skill whose extremely rare acquisition path may be opened through diligent practice)

[Appraisal] 9 (MAX) ability to decipher the information contained in the items of this world by utilizing one's refined judgement.

[Database] - ability to consult information previously acquired with [Appraisal]. Searching via keywords is also possible. Gained from [Appraisal] reaching the upper limit.

Age 0 (6 Months 3 Days 21 Hours 03 Minutes 19 Seconds)

Relations
Father Alfred Chrebl 39 Years Old Viscount | Santamana Kingdom Third Army Commander |《Castle Destroyer》
Mother Julia 20 Years Old Mistress| Former Adventurer (A Rank) | Magic User |《Flame Prison Witch》
<abbr title="(elder brothers with different mothers)">Step-brothers</abbr> Belhart 19 Years Old Viscount | Santamana Kingdom Imperial Knight |《Young Falcon》
Chester 17 Years Old Adventurer (B Rank) |《No Second Shot》
David 16 Years Old Santamana Kingdom Royal Librarian's Assistant|《Wonder Child》

<Goddess of Virtue's Blessing> (The blessing of the goddess who governs the transmigration of souls, Atrazenec. Accelerates the soul's growth. Releases all skill acquisition conditions. Small compensation for the skills' learning | growth.) 》

[Database] was acquired after [Appraisal] reached the cap. My only targets of [Appraisal] have been myself and the moon so I'm not sure, but it will probably be a very helpful skill in the future.

[Instant Interpretation] is probably the reason I have been hearing things in Japanese despite this being a different world.
The effective duration is 3 years. In other words, I must learn the language before I turn 3.
If I don't turn it off and practice the language now, while it still isn't urgent or needed, I'll be troubled in the future.

I also confirmed that the <Goddess of Virtue's Blessing> had rather cheat-like specifications.
Didn't Goddess-sama say she couldn't give me anything big?
Or is this amount not considered to be 'great'?

……This wasn't because she overwrote the original baby infant's character or something, right?
Well, that goddess probably wouldn't do such cruel things.
I'd like to think that I just didn't awaken the memories of my previous life until I had been developing for 6 months.

Apart from this, I was able to see the particulars of the Chrebl viscount household and the family members' personal information, but the information I hoped for wasn't there so I had to give up.

But didn't our family excel a bit too much?
Every single member seemed to possess a nickname.
Even my mother, Julia, seemed to have been a spirited adventurer.《Flame Prison Witch》. It was an incredible nickname, unexpected of her ordinary appearance.

I was still unacquainted with my father Alfred.
Since he appears to be part of the military, he may have gone to war.
And this person has a somewhat grim sounding nickname.
With his《Castle Destroyer》nickname, it seems possible for him to receive a slightly higher peerage though.
But then again, I don't know the conditions for receiving a reward in Santamana Kingdom? so that may just be the way it is.

Be as it may, there are a few issues.

Like a 39 year old having a 20 year old wife (as a second wife at that), among other things.

It's truly outrageous!
With this status quo, I don't feel like getting along with this father of mine!
In my past life, I didn't have a lover even at 30.

From [Appraisal]'s results, I could see that my three elder brothers were also quite remarkable as well.
Because it called him an imperial knight, Belhart must be an elite among elites, to be protecting the royal family. As for Chester, from the impression given by in the webnovels, reaching B Rank adventurer at 17 years old is also should also be really great. Being called a librarian assistant gave off an apprentice-like image, but considering his age and that the place of employment was the royal library, David might differ from the elder brothers above him and have outstanding scholastic talent.

By the way, the initials of us siblings are, in order from the eldest – B, C, D, E (Belhart, Chester, David, Edgar) respectively, so if I get confused then I can just refer to our initials! Ah, I'm guessing A is for Father (Alfred).

Huh? Why does the alphabet appear in this world?
Don't ask me that, ask the Goddess.
To be accurate, it has letters that are different, but look similar to the alphabet.

Back to the topic, the Chrebl viscount household are nobles of the country, possessing a small territory in the area…… Or so it was supposed to be, but it seems as though it is greatly flourishing, with my father as chief and my elder brothers each prospering in their own fields.
I wonder if I will slowly learn about these matters?

Be that as it may, I'm not that concerned about these household matters.
What's occupying my interest at the moment is,

S-K-I-L-L-S!

But in three days, I have already reached the counter stop for the [Appraisal] skill I could easily use indoors.
There's not much that I can do as an infant who can't even crawl well enough yet.

If this was a webnovel about reincarnation, I wouuld utilise [Appraisal]'s MP consumption to

exhaust my MP, and then earnestly increase my maximum MP with the MP overcompensation, but this [Appraisal] skill doesn't consume MP for some reason.
Even though it's called a skill, it seems it isn't magic, but a pure technique that tempers my discerning eye to see through the target's information.
At present, I don't really know how statuses like the one from before are being displayed. What I can say is, it doesn't use MP so it's probably not at the level of magic. By the way, the display language is in Japanese.

Therefore, what I think I want to obtain the most right now is a method to consume MP.
In short, it's fine even if it's something simple, I just want to use magic!.

As there is MP, it should be certain that this world has magic.
But how does someone learn magic in this world?

Reading books? Having a mentor? Attending a magic academy? Or is it an innate talent?

Hmm, I don't know. Rather than that, I've never seen magic before that. I should try starting from there first.

——Because there's a perfect role model nearby.

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4. Magic Acquisition

Editors: CWP, Darkanlan, Elemintabni, Hakubruh, Alec & Choco.

"Fuahofu! Fuahofu!" (Magic! Magic!)

"Ah, there there. Is it perhaps time to change your diaper?"

"Hyaho! Myahyofu!"(Magic! Magic!)

"Maybe you want breastfeeding?"

"Hihya, hohehoiihedo, fuafuou!" (Well that's also good but, Magic!)

What am I doing, you ask?

Naturally, I'm asking Julia-kaasan to teach me magic.

Sadly, it seems my mother can't understand my words very well.
Of course, it would be stranger if she could understand me, since I'm asking to be taught magic when I can't even speak properly yet.

……Well, more than that,
I don't know how magic is used, but if magic needs an incantation, then I would probably need to understand the language of this world. And even if I can acquire it by reading books, I will still need to be able to read the letters at the very least.
[Instant Interpretation] is only usable for interpreting and not for translating, so it looks like I can't use it to translate the content of books.
Well, even if it was possible, it would still be limited to 3 years. No matter what, it's necessary to study the letters.

Alright! Let's learn words first.

With that decided, I'll quickly….. How should I go about doing it?
Needless to say, the current me is a newborn infant, and it might be a little early to get someone to read to me at this stage, even in Japan.

Hang on……?
When I fell prostrate, there was something at my feet. It lay underneath the cheek of Julia-kaasan, who seemed to be making a happy sleeping face.
With drool dripping onto it, I could see what looked like a book.

Moving excitedly on the bed, I approach the book?

Sure enough, it really was a book.
I take care so as to not disturb my mother's sleep while I try to extract the book from under her.

But this..... is heavy.
It's a bulky book that seems to have at least a thousand pages.

The cover is leather, and the insides are paper.
It seems Marquekt has papermaking technology. If there was only parchment then it would be difficult to even secure notepaper for writing down the letters.

Ah, that's right, [Appraisal].

《Rare book『Abaddon Magic Compilation』: An encyclopedia of magic written by Gweg Abaddon(グェッグ・アバドン), a magic scholar from the 10th century. It is well known for its tenaciously elaborate depictions and accurate descriptions, but is currently out of print, and is only possessed by several large-scale libraries.》

I've hit the jackpot!

Full of anticipation, I turn the cover of the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』with a trembling hand.

There—

"……Fun, Fuaa, Fuafuah hehaone" (Yeah, well, I already knew though.)

The page was completely covered in mysterious letters that I couldn't read.
And furthermore, it was packed with small print arranged in three columns.
This.. wouldn't this be difficult even if I could understand the words?

And,

"……Hm? Huh, Edgar-kun?"

Perhaps it was due to my wretched rummaging around, but my mother woke up.
I don't know why, but she called me "Edgar-kun", adding -kun to my name.

"Oh my, were you reading the book?"

"Aii~"

I didn't actually read it, and couldn't even read, but I replied adorably for the time being.

"That book is difficult, you see. If you read it at night when you can't sleep, you'll be able to sleep all of a sudden."

Is that really alright,《Flame Prison Witch》?

"There are picture books more suited for you, Edgar-kun, so let's look at those, okay~"

"!!!"

Saying that, Julia-kaasan tries to take the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』away from me.

“Ah~daa~!”

I frantically cling to the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』.

As if I’m going to let this chance get away!

“Geez. Didn’t I say it was difficult? Well, in that case, how about I read a little bit for you?”

My mother says, thinking I would understand if she read it.

When she sees me babbling happily in response, she says, “what a strange kid,” as she sits on a chair beside the bed and spread the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』before me, who was on the bed.

“Let’s see, alright. Then, let’s read the [Water] entry.”

The『Abaddon Magic Compilation』is an encyclopedia, so the records are itemised.

“In regards to the study of magic, water refers to the possible series of events (matter | phenomenon) caused by interference from the magic letter『π (Aqua)』. However, it must be kept in mind that what it is comprised of deviates from our everyday impressions. For example, it is possible to manipulate human blood using π, but not mercury, as it is part of the magic letter representing earth『Ω (Gaia)』’s scope of interference instead. The clouds drifting in the sky may appear to be within the jurisdiction of the magic letter of Wind『λ (Wind)』at first glance, but the ones who reported a success in interference are limited to those who utilised π. It appears that this matter is easy to understand for those who have climbed a high mountain. Because part of these mountains, their summits, reach a point surpassing the clouds, mountain climbers will penetrate the clouds en route. In that situation, mountain climbers will pass through chilly and moist air as if they were walking through fog, and their whole body will be subject to a vast quantity of water. In other words, clouds are formed from water. As you can see, the study of magic is not only the cultivation of magic, but the comprehension of all things in nature as well. Incidentally, there exist ‘reports of success’ within the reports concerning the manipulation of clouds in which the magic letter of wind『λ』was used. However, this is no more than scattering clouds by way of wind, and is a completely different phenomenon to altering the shape of clouds by manipulating its base form of water. The young magic scholars of the present have a tendency to rush towards achievement and shirk on straightforward verification work, but theory which doesn’t pass through verification is no more than the mere delusions of those people, and by all rights, is presumptuous to call those sort of people scholars.
……Umm, is that enough?”

She seemed to have read to me because I had been earnestly listening, but indeed, this was a somewhat considerably tiresome book.
The passion of the author, who incorporated all the information that he personally knew, was amazing but it was hard to understand the logic behind including even the finest details, and above all, it would make one sleepy if they read it.

I felt that the base form of clouds was a natural matter, as my past life was of a modern Japanese person. The end part also seemed somewhat silly too. I can also understand Julia-kaasan using it for sleeping.

However, I thought that it was unexpectedly good.

I don't know the common sense of this world at any rate.
This encyclopedia which even insistently and persistently includes the obvious things, might be a mountain of treasure if one can ignore the boredom at least.

But……I really couldn't read it.
The letters in the book were comprised of a combination of approximately 20 character varieties indistinguishable from the alphabet, Greek characters, and Cyrillic characters, so the language concept was probably fundamentally similar to European languages.

Even so, there were things I understood at once.

It was the letters for magic.
Water is『π (Aqua)』, Earth is『Ω (Gaia)』, and Wind is『λ (Wind)』.
It didn't appear so I don't know it, but there's probably one for Fire as well.

Here, π (pi), Ω (omega), and λ (lambda) were scattered about, although more accurately, they were unknown symbols that were similar to them. As for the reading, I listened carefully to Julia-kaasan's words and that was how they were pronounced.
My mother points to the corresponding section with her finger as she reads aloud, so at least I was able to pick up the important parts one way or another.

However, I didn't understand the other parts at all, seeing them for the first time.

"Auau~"

One more time! I yell out, hitting the passage just now with the palm of my hand.

"Eh~? You want me to read it once more?"

Julia-kaasan appeared blatantly troubled, but she answered to my request and read the same passage once again.
This time I'll switch my [Instant Interpretation] to OFF, and pick up the raw sounds.
……Woah, I seriously can't understand.

"#$%◇……『π (Aqua)』……『Ω (Gaia)』……『λ (Wind)』……"

I move my mouth, mumbling along in my lisp, as I attempt to imitate my mother's words.
And when she finished, another encore.
While crying and clinging to the book, I had Julia-kaasan read around a dozen times.
I was still unsatisfied but as one would expect, my mother who didn't have [No Fatigue] had on a fed up expression.
Casting a sidelong glance at my mother, I frantically continued reproducing the sounds I

listened to just now, in my mind.

I wouldn't be able to learn an unfamiliar language by having it repeated ten times with the brains of my past life, but maybe it was thanks to the absorbing powers of an infant, or perhaps [No fatigue] preventing me from tiring mentally, I was able to remember the words to the extent of following them.
Of course, I would immediately forget them with just that, so I continued to memorise nothing but the water entry in the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』for half a day afterwards.
It was harsh repetitive work like the ascetic practices of a cult religion from somewhere in my previous life, but thanks to [No Fatigue], I was able to continue nonstop without tiring or losing interest.
Mother left the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』by the bedside, so I recited the water entry in a mutter while following the book's sentences with my eyes.

While doing that, I could somehow understand the sentence rules.
I was able to infer the meaning of the numerous words in the Water entry, and I was able to decipher the spelling conventions corresponding to the sounds.
Fortunately, it seemed the spellings generally represented the sounds as they were, and I was also able to grasp the conventions which separated the consonants and vowels.

They were unfamiliar characters, so I compared them to the alphabet of my former world and successively memorised the corresponding relationships (It would be useful if I could write them down in a notebook or something, but there wasn't anything like that in this room).
I would decipher them when it was bright and would do nothing but repeatedly reciting them from memory at night, sorting them inside my head so that I would be able to recall them even at random times.
It was such troublesome work so that if it was my previous life, I would want to flee just by imagining it. But thanks to [No Fatigue], I didn't tire so inside my head, and I was able to completely dedicate the whole day to the correspondence chart for the Marquekt characters and the alphabet.
With this, I was at least able to pronounce sentences for now, even when I've never seen before.

And then, while working on the correlation of this alphabet, I realised something interesting.

The magic letters π, Ω, and λ frequently appear in the spelling of other words.
Furthermore, it seems these represent vowels.

The correspondence chart I made looks like this.
・π = a
・Ω = o
・λ = u

And this language (Marquektese?) only has 4 vowels (they have composite vowels that combine vowels, such as – au, ou).
In other words, the final vowel remaining,

・ト= i (e)

This vowel should be the magic letter for Fire.
I don’t know the pronunciation, but it should probably be something like Fire, Flame, or Flare.
I read it as “Boku” for the time being though.

Well, I was excited when I reached this inference.

I AM A GENIUS!

I felt like there was a banner with such, hanging above my head.

And, while keeping this symbol (ト) in my mind, I traced it with my finger on my blanket.
I continued writing “トトトトトト……”
With the concentration powers of [No Fatigue] on full throttle, that was.

And then——

It resulted in a small fire.

---

5. Small Fire

I clearly remember the events that transpired in that instant.

The moment I wrote “ ᚦ” , the letter that should not have been visible shone with light, and I felt something come out of my fingertip.
In the next instant, there was ignition.
It was a lighter-sized flame, but I had written the character on my blanket. It caught fire in the blink of an eye.

“Fuafueeeeeee!” (Craaaaaaaap!)

I cried out in a flustered voice, hoping some adults would come running.
I’m just an infant. I’m unable to even run away by myself.

Before long, I could hear the sound of footsteps within the estate.

However, the fire was still spreading.

Then, I suddenly realise.

“……! Akua! Akua! π (Aqua)!”

I shout, picturing in my head『π』, the magic symbol for water that was introduced in the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』.
Among the magic symbols, I was barely able to pronounce π with my infant vocal chords at least.
Be that as it may, I was taking a gamble and only shouted out, without writing the symbol.

However, it was successful.

With a splash, a cupful of water was produced from my fingertip and extinguished a portion of the flames that had spread on the bed.
Because the flames had spread, it wasn’t enough to extinguish everything.

(……I can do it!)

“π π π π!”

I recklessly called out the magic symbol repeatedly.

Splash, Splash, Splash. I dispense water around the bed, and the flames that spread vanished, leaving behind black burn marks.

Then, the door of my room opened.

“Edgar-kun, what’s wrong!? ..Kyaa!”

Julia-kaasan barged in, and was surprised at the devastating spectacle on my bed.

At this time, I use magic as added insurance.

“π ,——au..!?”

As I heard my mother’s shriek, I lost consciousness for the first time, on the fourth day of my reincarnation.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

When I opened my eyes, my mother’s worried-looking face came at me.

Judging from the scene outside the window, not much time had passed.

I was scolded amply by Julia-kaasan.
I feel like there’s no point in scolding a 0 year old baby, but I suppose she had been that concerned.

Mother constantly supervised me after that.
It might be a justified reaction as a parent, but I was very troubled.

When my mother is here, I can’t use magic.
It appears that Mother is also an excellent magic user, and will immediately sense it when I try to use magic.
I thought I could somehow get away with the inconspicuous wind—— λ (wind), but it was “thwarted” before I could invoke it, as if she perceived signs of my magic invocation.
In regards to this “thwarting”, when I carefully observed my mother, she seemed to write a “Ǝ”-like character on her own thigh to match my invocation of magic.
In that case, I thought to first show signs of using λ, solicit my mother’s “Ǝ”, and then try writing my own “Ǝ” in that instant.
But, it failed. Mother’s “Ǝ” only erased my λ and my “Ǝ” targeting Mother’s “Ǝ” was not invoked.

I wrack my brains.
I see, I had pictured “Ǝ” but didn’t picture its effects.
In other words, what’s necessary for the invocation of magic is to clearly picture the magic symbol and its effects.

With that conclusion, I once again displayed the action of invoking λ and induced my mother’s “Ǝ”.
Then, I also invoked “Ǝ”. This time I pictured both the symbol and effect. The imagined effect was, for the time being, the concept of “erasure”.

And so, in regards to what happened:
My “Ǝ” was also safely invoked, negating my mother’s “Ǝ”.
My mother opens her eyes widely.
And then, my λ that my mother tried to negate was invoked without obstruction, and a soft

gust of wind blew in the room.

"The ∃ (erase) just then…… Edgar-kun?"

I giggle in response to Julia-kaasan, who was making a grim face.

"To think you would learn magic not even a year after your birth. It's dangerous so stop…… but even if I say that, you probably don't understand."

Mother exits the room while muttering, 'how troubling.'

I feel like I did something a little bad, but it's favourable for me now.

First, I'll start with [Appraisal].
From now on, I will cut out unnecessary information.

《Edgar Chrebl

Level 1
HP 4/4
MP 5/7

Skills
• Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

• Legendary class
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] 1

• General
[Fire Magic] 1
[Water Magic] 1
[Wind Magic] 1
[Mana Manipulation] 1
[Simultaneous Invocation] 1

<Goddess of Virtue's Blessing> 》

Hmm. The status displayed each kind of attribute magic skill, not the magic symbol.
In any case, it looks like I safely acquired the skills, which is good.

Besides that, the issue is MP.

Firstly, the fact that my maximum value has risen.
This was still easy to understand.
It was because during the small fire incident just before, my MP was exhausted and I fainted.

It was probably the case of my maximum MP increasing after the MP was used up, as with the arrangement in the reincarnation webnovels.
Yeah, it's good news.

However, the incomprehensible part was my current MP.
5.
I wonder why it has become this sketchy value.

Let's think chronologically.
Firstly my MP became 0 due to the small fire incident.
This was evident from my fainting. It was even specified in the helpful information about MP, "One will faint when their MP reaches 0."

After that, MP recovered during the short fainting spell……I suppose.
In that case, I should have fainted when I tried to discreetly cast magic in front of my mother.
The magic invocation was thwarted by Mother's "∃" but I did sense the consumption of mana itself, so my MP should have decreased as well.

From what I could grasp with that thinking, the current MP should be 3.
The first try: λ was thwarted, -1.
The second try: λ was thwarted again in the same manner, -1. ∃ failed, 0.
For the third try, the ∃ that negated mother's ∃ was -1, the λ invoked after that was -1, making it -2 in total.
That is to say, the total MP consumed after I woke up becomes 4.
And so, with 7 – 4, my current MP becomes 3. That would be the natural concept.

However, my current MP is 5.

Whilst puzzled, I perform [Appraisal] one more time.

《Edgar Chrebl

Level 1
HP 4/4
MP 7/7

Skills
• Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

• Legendary class
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] 1

• General
[Fire Magic] 1

[Water Magic] 1
[Wind Magic] 1
[Mana Manipulation] 1
[Simultaneous Invocation] 1

<Goddess of Virtue's Blessing> 》

……Huh?

My MP has recovered.

In other words, the MP in this world is something like the Stamina in certain hunting games and recovers through the passing of time?

Or, is the "won't tire mentally" characteristic of [No Fatigue] involved somehow?

In that case, the mystery of the deficient 'current MP' from before is solved.
In short, it's something like this:

・First λ negated, -1
・Second λ negated, -1. ∃ failed, 0
・At this time, MP recovers <- NEW!
・Third λ invoked, -1. ∃ invoked, -1 (Total -2)
・Consequently, 7 – 2 = 5

Incidentally,
・I had been contemplating the appraisal result
・During this time, MP recovers
・MP is 7 upon reappraisal

It needs verification but in the end, my MP recovers to the maximum value a short time after using magic.

Julia-kaasan returns, after I have analysed up to this point.

"I can't do anything about what you've learned already, but ordinary magic is dangerous, okay~"

Saying that, she places a cardboard box-sized wooden crate down in front of me.
Inside the wooden crate were toy building blocks.
My mother picks up one of the building blocks from inside, on top of which she writes some kind of symbol with her finger.
It was a " ♭ "-like symbol.
The symbol disappears suddenly without even glowing and in the next instant, the building block floats up from my mother's palm.

"Aua!" (Wow!)

I unintentionally give a cheer.

Mother retrieved a card-like thing from her pocket, and handed it over to me.
On the card was the “ ♭ ” from just now written in a large font.
When I turn it over, written down were the Marquekt letters read as “Physik”, according to my mental interaction chart.

“This is ♭ (physik). It might be complicated if I start talking about the details, but I suppose it’s fine to think of it as telekinesis, maybe? ……but even if I say that, you probably don’t understand.”

Mother puts several building blocks in front of me.

I immediately crawl towards them and write “ ♭ ” on a building block with my finger.

Gently, the building block floated.

“Uwah, it really succeeded. Is Edgar-kun a genius by any chance?”

Julia-kaasan chuckles in happiness.

A little pleased, I cast “ ♭ ” on the building blocks in front of me, one by one.

A total of six building blocks floated in the air.

When I looked at mother as if asking, ‘Howzat?’ Mother stared in wonder again.

“Y-you can do simultaneous invocation? W-well you did use ∃ on my ∃ while invoking λ just then……this is, I better consult with that person too.”

Casting a sidelong glance at my mumbling mother, I release the ♭ on the building blocks, and again etch ♭ on the building blocks fallen on my bed.
This time I was careful, so I realised that the MP recovery started about ten seconds after I released them.
During the small fire, I used π in a flash, so there was no time to recover.

“Ah, Edgar-kun, if you use magic in succession too much, you’ll faint again?”

Mum says worriedly.
As I expected, this recovery seems abnormal. In that case, it’s reasonable to think of it as an effect of [No Fatigue].
It might be better if I don’t continuously invoke magic in front of my mother.

——Anyhow, with this, I discovered the next repetitive operation after [No Fatigue].

6. Counter Stop, Counter Stop, Counter Stop (Firebird)

A week passed since I learned magic.

The repetition works I'm currently doing are the following two:

First: I use up my MP all the way to 0 and with that raise the maximum MP value.
Second: I make the building blocks float with ♭. Of course multiple ones at the same time. When releasing, instead of releasing it normally, I use ∃. In other words, I'm leveling ♭ and ∃.

The other magics, partly because Julia-kaasan said so, I'm leaving until later for now.
I don't think it would be found out at night, but mom was also worried about misfires. I'm still just a baby, so if some accident happens I perhaps wouldn't able to deal with it myself. I think I will start with them when I'm at least big enough to run away when something happens.

Besides work, I'm progressing with the deciphering of『Abaddon Magic Compilation』, which I got from mom by throwing a tantrum.
It's a process where I ask mom to read an entry a few times, which I earnestly try to memorize and then compare it with the written words.
It's a mentally tiresome work, which I would've stopped before long in my previous life, but thanks to the [No Fatigue] skill I don't get bored or tired.
Thanks to the correspondence table, only reading the writing is no problem, and as the result of comparing it with the memorized words, my vocabulary is also steadily increasing.

I would really like to have a trustworthy dictionary, but since the six months old me spends his entire day in a crib, I couldn't even explore the insides of the mansion yet.
From the window of this child room, a fairly spacious – more than a modern Japanese person could hope for – garden can be seen. If the building is also comparatively sized, then maybe there is something like a study or a library room.

It's a different topic, but the day after I used magic in front of mother Julia, an exclusive maid was assigned to me.
Julia-kaasan brought over three maids in turns, checked my affinity with them, then assigned one of them to me.
She is a girl in about her mid-teens, has a childish face and big breasts.
…..Of course, during the above-mentioned affinity check, it's needless to say that I did my utmost to indicate that this girl is the best.
Her name is Stephanie, and according to the conversation between her and Julia-kaasan, she appears to be a daughter of an influential person within our domain.
Waiting for a moment when Julia-kaasan wasn't present, I covertly used [Appraisal] on her, and

《Stephanie: Village girl. Age: 16. Level 1, HP: 8/8, MP: 7/7. Skills: None》

Mhm. Ordinary. Is the only impression I have currently.

I thought there would be skills like housework and such, but it doesn't seem to be the case.
Maybe the skills in this world are only those that are related to combat.

I want to use [Appraisal] on Julia-kaasan too, but I feared that she may notice, so I didn't try it yet.
But I know that [Appraisal] isn't magic, so if I wait and use it when she's asleep it should be alright.
Thinking that, I use [Appraisal] on mom when she fell asleep rocking my crib.

《
Julia Chrebl (Wife of Viscount Chrebl《Flame Prison Witch》)

Level 47
HP 79/79
MP 253/253

Skills
•Master class（Skills unlocked by diligent training.）
[Fire Element Magic] 4
[Mana Control] 4

•General
[Fire Magic] 7
[Water Magic] 3
[Wind Magic] 3
[Earth Magic] 2
[Light Magic] 3
[Telekinesis Magic] 2
[Mana Manipulation] 5
[Mana Perception] 6
[Simultaneous Invocation] 3
》

…..isn't she, helluva amazing?

Having that many skills is also probably amazing (there are even Master class skills), but since I don't have a point of reference for this world I'll just leave it for now.

What I find most amazing of all is the HP and MP.

At a quick glance, those numbers look like they belong to a magician from a generic RPG.
Perhaps the HP feels a bit like with those numbers it would be somewhat troublesome to take on a boss from the second half of the game with.

But, remember.

[Appraisal].

《HP: the abstract conversion of one's life force into a numerical value. Current value/Maximum value. 10 is the standard value for an average level 1 male adult. It is rare for someone to die when HP remains, or to live despite having 0 HP, but it is possible. The maximum value can temporarily decrease due to injury, illness, or fatigue.》

Particularly important is this:

《……10 is the standard value for an average level 1 male adult.……》

In other words, Julia-kaasan's 79 HP means that she has nearly 8 times the amount than an average Level 1 adult male.
In this world, I don't really know what the 'Level 1 adult male' is like, but seeing how Steph (Stephanie) is Level 1 at 16 years old, it probably means that common people that aren't soldiers or adventurers are mostly all Level 1.

Take for example the reason I ended up reincarnating on Marquekt, the slasher.
The office worker he stabbed from the previous world should have approximately the same status as a 'Level 1 adult male' in this world.
By that criteria, that should mean that even if Julia-kaasan were to be stabbed by a slasher a few times it wouldn't become a fatal wound.

Is that really possible?

Moreover, her HP is already very high, but Julia-kaasan's real worth should be in her MP.
253.
According to [Appraisal]'s Help,《10 is the standard value for an average level 1 male adult.》, so that means that Julia-kaasan's MP(amount of mana) is more than 25 times the average person's.
Considering that the MP consumption of the simplest configuration magic using letters (like ├ or π) is 1, it probably means the she has quite an abundant amount of mana.

Of course, the possibility that in the outside world there are plenty of mom-class adventurers is not nil.

And as an extra, here is my status.

《Edgar Chrebl
Level 1
HP 4/4
MP 77/77

Skills
•Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

•Legendary class

[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –

•Master class
[Physical Magic] 1
[Mana Control] 1
[Letterless Invocation] 1

•General
[Fire Magic] 1
[Water Magic] 1
[Wind Magic] 1
[Earth Magic] 1
[Light Magic] 1
[Telekinesis Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Simultaneous Invocation] 9 (MAX)

<Goddess of Virtue's Blessing> 》

Yes, I reached Counter Stop with [Telekinesis Magic], [Mana Manipulation], and [Simultaneous Invocation]!

Their respective Counter Stop bonuses were [Physical Magic], [Mana Control], and [Letterless Invocation].

[Physical Magic] uses ♭ just like [Telekinesis Magic], but its effect and power are greatly augmented, it seems. It's okay to think of it like the [Telekinesis Magic] version of Julia-kaasan's [Fire Element Magic].

[Mana Control] uses ∃ just like [Mana Manipulation], and it's the upward compatible version of [Mana Manipulation].
It matches with mom. Mom didn't reach Counter Stop with [Mana Manipulation], so there should be other ways to learn it.

As for [Letterless Invocation], the process of invocation for magic requires at least one of the 'writing of a magic letter' or the 'pronouncing the magic letter' action, but [Letterless Invocation] allows the user to omit both of them.
By imagining the letter and the effect in the brain, and with the signal of a trigger action, like voice, thought, or gesture, one can activate the magic.

But leaving aside [Physical Magic] and [Mana Control], [Letterless Invocation] is definitely nasty.
What's nasty about it is, well of course when I'm using it it's very convenient, but if some vile people were to learn it, they could freely execute surprise attacks and feints to their heart's content.

Even mom, who has a nickname, has the [Simultaneous Invocation] at 3, so there shouldn't too many people with it, but I mustn't forget about it.
On the request of the Goddess, I have to do something about the slasher that reincarnated in this world.

The other side has the Evil God with him it seems, so most likely he has cheat-like powers just like mine.
Moreover, he is also a reincarnated person, so there is no way [Simultaneous Invocation] wouldn't catch his eye, and so there is a chance he would also get its Counter Stop bonus [Letterless Invocation].

No, it's nearly certain he will get it. I have to assume that.
Certainly, I have [No Fatigue]. If our starting points are the same, the other side shouldn't have [Letterless Invocation] yet, but it's probably only a matter of time.
Just like how Julia-kaasan obtained [Mana Control] without reaching the Counter Stop in [Mana Manipulation], there could be other ways of acquiring it.

That being said, there are limits to what a 6-month-old baby can do.
For the time being raising the levels of the 3 new Master class skills and expanding the maximum MP should be alright.

Thanks to [No Fatigue] my MP recovers fairly fast, but even so the significance of the maximum MP doesn't go away.
In the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』book, which I've memorized almost a third of by now, there are descriptions of large-scale spells that consume huge amounts of mana.
Also, there are situations where using spells one after another without rest is needed.

If in dire situations one can't use a spell because their maximum MP is too low, or they used up all their MP because there wasn't any time to rest, it really affects the chances for survival.
It's a drawback that whenever I use up all my MP I get assaulted by splitting headaches, but getting over that with guts, I make sure to exhaust my MP at least 10 times a day.
Fortunately, thanks to [No Fatigue] it seems I wake up after a few minutes anyway.

In this way, I spent all my days training 24 hours a day, without sleep, without rest, until ——

"——Julia! I'm home!"

With a more youthful voice than expected, the one that leapt into my room was,

——Alfred Chrebl.

The man that is my dad in this life.

| TOC |

7. Debut Meeting

Father came bursting in just as I was drinking from Julia-kaasan's breasts.

Somehow it felt as though a husband had finished work earlier than planned and was returning to where his wife was having an affair, but if you think about it, there's nothing to be guilty of.

"——Al-kun!"

Julia-kaasan's face suddenly brightens, and she turns around to her husband.
That was not to say that she was making a completely submissive face, but it gave the impression of a pet that had awaited its owner's return home.
Or rather, this person even attaches 'kun' to her husband's name.

"It seems Sonora-to (ソノラート) finally calmed down as well, so I took a little holiday and came back."

I didn't know what Sonora-to refered to, but there was something more important.

This person, was 39 years old…… right?

I can only see him as a handsome guy with long, silky blond hair in his mid-twenties. Let's use [Appraisal] once again.
Thanks to the newly acquired [Mana Control], I can now cast [Appraisal] without Julia-kaasan noticing.

《Alfred Chrebl (Viscount | Santamana Kingdom Third Army Commander |《Castle Destroyer》)
Age 39
Half Elf

Level 39
HP 91/91
MP 79/79

Skills
• Master class
[Leadership] 4
[Spearmanship] 4

• General
[Command] 7
[Sword Skills] 5
[Bow Skills] 3
[Spear Skills] 9 (MAX)
[Unarmed Combat Skills] 3

[Dagger Skills] 1
[Horse Riding Skills] 5
[Water Magic] 3
[Wind Magic] 4
[Earth Magic] 4》

Half-elf!?

Now that you mention it, the tip of his ear tapers a little.
And that might also be why he appears younger than his actual age.

My mother, Steph and I are clearly human, so was the race not appearing in the [Appraisals] so far because I didn't have the idea of investigating our races from the start?
And I was harbouring doubts about my father's youthful appearance when I used [Appraisal] this time so this information appeared…… I guess.
In other words, I shouldn't believe that information can be obtained as long I use [Appraisal] mindlessly.
Yeah, I learned a good thing.

Putting that aside, it seems my father's status is quite something.
He has over 9 times as much HP as a level 1 adult male.
And his MP isn't at the level of ordinary people either. It is 2 higher than mine.

In regards to the spear, the general skill [Spear Skills] has reached the counter stop, and he's even acquired the master class higher tier skill [Spearmanship].
He seems to be poor at magic for a half-elf, but I'm using Julia-kaasan as a reference so this might still be within their capacity.
Even in the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』, it is written that elves have a large mana pool by nature and are also proficient in using magic.

What concerns me more are the [Command] and [Leadership] skills, the "Santamana Kingdom Third Army Commander" title, and the《Castle Destroyer》nickname.

I already knew about the latter two from the [Appraisal] results on myself.
I thought for sure that he would be a more soldier-like, proud-looking middle-aged man with a good physique, but the real Alfred-tousan is a man of delicate features and appears younger than his real age, just like an elf. There's no out-of-place feeling even when he stands alongside the child-faced Julia-kaasan. They appear to be a well-matched young couple.

Although this handsome elf is apparently the elite "Santamana Kingdom Third Army Commander", I can't imagine it at all.
However, the level of his [Command] is high, though it hasn't reached the counter stop, and he even possesses the master class higher tier skill [Leadership]. Furthermore, [Leadership]'s level is also raised to a decent level.

In other words, he has been working in a field that requires [Command] and [Leadership] for a considerable length of time.

Let's use [Appraisal] on [Command] and [Leadership].

《[Command] : A skill for commanding a low to mid-scale unit. Provides an offset when commanding a group with Skill Level × 20 people.》
《[Leadership] : A skill for commanding troops over a thousand. Provides an offset when commanding a group with Skill Level × 1000 people.》

In short, Father can receive a skill correction when commanding/leading an army with a maximum of 4000 people.
He could probably lead a slightly larger group somehow if he isn't counting on the skill correction.
Assuming there are around 4000 people in the Third Army, 'Santamana Kingdom' has 3 divisions and thus 12,000 soldiers employed at the least. That in itself seems like a large kingdom.

Now then, it seems to be the first meeting for the other side as well, and Dad takes me from Julia-kaasan, who has finished breastfeeding, and nervously embraces me in his arms.

"Wahh."

"There, there, it's Papa. I'm sorry for not coming to see you for so long."

Seeing that I wasn't afraid, Alfred-papa throws me high up in excitement.
But for me, who was an adult inside, being thrown up high was somewhat scary.
This… I won't be able to enjoy it because I'm not an infant who doesn't know that 'it will hurt if I fall'.
This weightless feeling when I separate from Papa's arms, and the OMG feeling at the moment when my rising changes to sinking, it was sort of like a rollercoaster ride.

"W-waaah."

I ended up letting out a stiff cry.
My apologies, Papa. I'm not a cute child.

A while after our first meeting, Father seemed to recall something.

"Come to think of it, I received a letter saying that he could use magic but…… you were joking, right?"

As expected, his reaction was like that.
Julia-kaasan pouts in rebuttal.

"It's true. Even I wouldn't write such a joke to my husband at the frontlines."

"B-but, hasn't only 6 months passed? Even David, who was the earliest, was 5 years old.

And that too caused quite an uproar. Ed can't even talk yet."

Papa had a point.
Or rather, apparently David-niisan (B, C, D, so he's the third brother) used magic at age 5. Is he a genius?

However, at this rate Julia-kaasan might be doubted.
Perhaps I should make my debut?

"Babu!"

Crying out, I attract the attention of the two.
And then, writing ♭ in the air, I elevate one of the building blocks on the bed.
My skill level had raised so this much was within the scope of effects.

The building block gently floats up into the air.
Adding just a little force, it bumps into the forehead of Alfred-tousan, who was watching dumbfoundedly.

"Ow! You!"

"It's because you were doubting Edgar-kun."

"Even so, he really can use it……"

Dad went beyond surprise and into bafflement.

——I was actually quite hesitant about whether I should show my abilities or hide them from my parents.
I suppose this is the point where plans diverge even in reincarnation webnovels?
I also wavered, but in the end I decided to show them to some extent.

Naturally, the reason was because I wanted to be able to learn with my parents' authorisation instead of practicing magic in secret.

I mastered [Telekinesis Magic] as such, but the essential attribute magic is still unmanageable.
It might be difficult while my body is small but even so, I want to master it someday.
At that time, it would be difficult to practice while hiding it from my parents with this infant body.

Besides, Julia-kaasan is a mage with a nickname, and Alfred-tousan is a half elf.
If I can have them lend a hand when I learn magic, it would be the greatest reassurance.

Their temperament was gentle, and I could tell that they really loved children even without them doing anything.

——These two people won't become a drawback for me.

Today, I held that belief so I decided to let them know about me possessing a special power, though I I did moderate it to some extent.

Now then, since that was what I decided, it's time to let them witness it.

I again wrote a few ♭ in the air, raising the other building blocks scattered on the bed into the air.
12 in all.
Although I didn't use [Letterless Invocation], using [Telekinesis Magic] and the level 4 [Simultaneous Invocation] was a befitting feat.

"Oh!?"

While still in the arms of my surprised Papa, I extend my stubby arms towards the sky with my palms facing towards the ceiling and wave them about.
Moving together with those actions (to be accurate, it's 'made to move'), the building blocks whirl around in the air in turn, drawing a large arc and returning to the top of my palm on the opposite hand.
That's right, I was juggling with [Telekinesis Magic].

"S-, [Simultaneous Invocation]……!?"

"T-the precision of [Telekinesis Magic] is also extraordinary."

Both husband and wife gave a good reaction.

In that case, I'll add a little more.

While continuing to juggle the building blocks, I smack the returning blocks with my left hand while repelling them with an emphasis
Of course, it's repelled with [Telekinesis Magic].

Just like that, I cause the building blocks flying in the juggling wheel to be suspended in a suitable place in the air.
The same number as I was juggling – in other words, I repeated it for a total of 12 times.

As a result, there are now 12 building blocks hanging in midair.

"This is a…… horse?"

"Babu." (Correct.)

Alfred-tousan saw through it correctly.
That was, the horse depicted with the building blocks.
For each of the legs, I combined two long and narrow building blocks, and gave it an impression of running in plains.

Casting a backwards glance at the two who were so surprised that their jaws almost

dropped, I shift the building blocks to form a different picture.

“I-is this a flower by any chance?”

“Babu.”

“This is….. a castle?”

“Babu.”

“I’ve got it! It’s a doggy?”

“Babu.”

“A steeple, maybe?”

“Bubu—”

The correct answer was Tokyo Tower.

Now then, the real questions start here.

Wearing a pointed hat, a person carrying a broom-like rod.

“Hm, is this… a mage?”

“Babu!”

That’s good. It was understood.
I suppose the mages in this world also wear pointy hats.

Then, the next one.

A cone-shape protrudes from the mage’s hand.

“Is he using magic perhaps?”

“Babu!”

Mama got it right.
With this, Julia-kaasan and Alfred-tousan are tied in points.
This final question is worth the most points!

——I move the cone from the mage’s hand to my own palm.

“”You want to use magic!””

——Bingo!

I want to award this well-coordinated pair with a couple’s trip to Hawaii.

If I manage to deal with the slasher somehow, I’ll think about it too.

---

8. Flying Baby (Firebird)

"Are you going already?"

Julia-kaasan said dejectedly.

"It can't be helped. The neighbouring Sonorato is still rowdy at the moment."

According to Alfred-tousan, the internal strife between influential lords in the neighbouring country Sonorato is slowly coming to an end with a ceasefire, but the embers are still smouldering, so the Third Area Army is still in a semi war-ready stance watching the borders of Sonorato.

In such a situation, Alfred-tousan managed to ask for the impossible and get a leave of absence after 7 months.

Its length is 2 weeks.

That feels long to a modern Japanese person, but it seems the distance on foot between this mansion and the Ranzrack Fortress, where dad is stationed, takes about 1 week to cover.

By having the [Horse Riding] skill, dad managed to come back in 5 days by changing horses, but even if he returns with the same pace, just traveling would take up 10 days.

Therefore, out of the two-week leave of absence, the number of days he can freely use is essentially 4, or if you take one off as a backup for traveling, then barely even 3.

"Even with things being as calm as they are, there is no telling what will happen. Normally something like the commander leaving the fortress shouldn't even happen, even temporarily. Thanks to my subordinates telling me 'We will make time for you to at least take a look at your child's face no matter what' I managed to come home somehow, but I can't stay for long. I really need to return to the fortress."

"'Return' to the fortress….huhh.."

Mom muttered wistfully.

Hey, Mr. Dad, isn't that a taboo word?

I draw a ♭ (Physik) and poke the head of the old man with a building block.

"Ouch! Hey, don't hit people with building blocks!"

"Baabu"

While being carried by dad, I glance at Julia-kaasan.

With that glance, it seems dad noticed what I wanted to say.

“…..heh? Me?”

Dad tightly hugged Julia-kaasan, who tilted her in confusion.

…..hey, don’t squeeze me in between.

“A child is sensitive to their parent’s feelings, they say. ‘Don’t make mom sad’ is probably what Ed wanted to say. Being my son, he is quite…. no, much too sharp!”

After giving me snappy retort, dad starts to think hard about something.

“….alright! Fortunately, battles are currently scarce. Let’s take you to the fortress this time.”

“Eeh? Really?”

“Well, as a father, being reprimanded by a baby like that…. Ed, do you want to visit dad’s workplace?”

“Baabu!”

So my first outing was decided to be a trip with both parents to the Ranzrack Fortress.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

It’s a one week journey to Ranzrack Fortress.

If it’s only dad, he could go faster it seems, but this time, in addition to Julia-kaasan, the barely six months old me is also here, so this became a trip where we ride the carriage in a gentle pace, so that we will arrive on the exact day when dad’s leave of absence ends.

(By the way, my private maid, Steph, is house-sitting.)

But, even with such a high level, was it alright for a commanding officer to ride home alone?

I started having such concerns, but it seems that while riding home, dad had town and village guards escort him alternatingly, and the plan was to rendezvous with the escorts from the fortress on the way back.

That means dad really did many unreasonable things to able to get home.

Maybe I did a bad thing somehow.

I was also interested in the towns and villages on the way, but since dad hurried forward, we only stayed for lodging in every town and village, and there was no extra time to look around.

There should be more flexibility with time on the way back from the fortress, so if I ask mom, we should be able to have a short look around a town.

On the way to the fortress, I decided to focus on expanding my maximum MP.

Since we were traveling with a carriage I couldn't just move any way I liked, even if I wanted to raise my magic levels, it was a situation where it was physically difficult to do so.

Also, I was able to get a promise from mom during the unveiling party that she will teach me magic, but only after we return from the trip.

However, there are problems with expanding my MP.

The biggest one is, that since both my parents are always with me, if I use up all my MP and faint, it would most likely become a small commotion.

Regarding that, I thought of a way of deceiving my parents and use magic sneakily by keeping my eyes closed, keeping my mana from leaking out with [Mana Control], and omitting the letter writing movements with [Letterless Invocation].

If I keep my eyes closed, even if I faint, no one can tell by looking.

The problem was what kind of magic should I use, but I got an excellent idea about that one too.

Having my butt hurt by the shaking of the carriage, I suddenly thought of using [Physical Magic] on myself.

'*fuwari*', only a little, but my body was floating.

Fortunately, on the way to the fortress, I could endlessly repeat the chain of 'keep using [Physical Magic] on my body, then faint when my MP runs out', without tiring.

My MP has grown quite high, so I thought that it would become difficult to use up, but I've found out that the Master class magic skills eat up at least 10 MP.

Furthermore, by activating [Mana Control], [Letterless Invocation] and [Physical Magic] in parallel, I can use up 30 MP at once.

Knowing that, it's simple.

I kept steadily increasing my MP, by continuously (not counting the time for meals and when my parents started talking to me) executing the infinite loop where I use up all my mp – which took a few seconds at first, then a few minutes after -, then faint for about 5 minutes, then start using up my MP once again.

——Those gratifying times continued on for 1 week (168 hours).

And then at last, the day of arrival to the Ranzrack Fortress, which was Alfred-tousan's workplace and the base of the Third Area Army of Santamana Kingdom, has finally come.

| TOC |

9. Ranzrack Fortress

"Woah, how big!"

Julia-kaasan said, looking up at the fortress' outer wall.

"Yeah, because this fortress is a strategic position even along the border with Sonora-to. It was made to be solid so that we can hole up if necessary. Even at the lowest position, the ramparts are 10.5 metres tall."

Our carriage crosses the fortress drawbridge as we listen to Alfred-tousan's explanation.

"Aigyaa."

I lean out the carriage window and point my finger at the approximately 5-metre wide moat below the drawbridge.

"Ed really is clever. That's right, that moat is also an important defence. Soldiers aren't able to cling to the walls, and it prevents them from getting close with a battering ram as well. As long as we raise the drawbridge, the only way to capture this fort is to fill in this moat."

Dad, who was saying that the quantity of water in the moat was a scheme as well, was just like a papa who invited his child for a workplace field trip.

"This fortress can accommodate 5000 military personnel at the most. But even so, that's only at the utmost maximum, and there are approximately 1500 people now. Combined with the 2000 stationed in the city beyond, there's a total of 3500 people under my leadership."

Saying that, Father puffs out his chest in pride.
To be entrusted with so many soldiers at age 39 is probably an amazing thing.

However, the military force he is able to command with his level 4 [Leadership] is 4000 so it's a little short.
[Appraisal] seems to be quite a rare skill, so they might have no choice but to approximate through experience, saying 'it should be fine if it's this much'.
It might simply be related to the number of soldiers in Santamana Kingdom though.

As we were listening to Dad's explanation, the carriage crossed the drawbridge, and entered inside the ramparts.

The carriage stopped in front of the large building at the core.

Several knights in armour came running out from the rustic building, giving the impression that it was 'Truly a fortress!'

"Welcome back, Commander-sama!"

"Mn, I appreciate your efforts."

Dad raised his hand casually, smiling cheerfully.

“There were no outstanding abnormalities in regards to Sonora-to’s national border during Commander-sama’s leave of absence. It was very peaceful!”

“That’s good.”

Dad replied smilingly, looking up at the fortress building.

“What about the other forts, any abnormalities?”

“No! Or so I would like to say, but…”

“Hm, what’s the matter?”

“Count Grusha(グルシャー) requested for 1000 soldiers to be sent to Zakholtz (ザックホルツ) fortress in the north, but that was this morning.”

“Zakholtz? Why?”

“According to the information we’ve received, the mercenary group <Black Wolf Fang> entered our country through the north road, with the intention of pillaging, after having been involved in resolving the internal strife within Sonora-to and losing their field of operations.”

“The <Black Wolf Fang> did…… I understand, let’s round up some soldiers.”

“Is that alright? I believe sending a thousand soldiers will weaken our defences here though.”

“It can’t be helped. The <Black Wolf Fang> is a gathering of ruffians with the intent of pillaging, but their skills as a mercenary group is high. If Zakholtz makes a mistake by some chance, the suffering that the town and villages behind that will go through…… Fortunately, the defences of this fortress are quite solid. Even with the remaining 500 soldiers, there should be no problem if it’s only for a short while. From the city behind…… that’s right, order half of the thousand soldiers to be sent from there.”

“Understood. In that case, I will begin organising the troops in haste!”

“Yeah, I’ll leave it to you.”

The knight in armour executed a sharp salute, and then advanced towards the building.

I received a deep impression of Dad’s commanding manner, which he had thoroughly mastered.

His expression was kind and polite, but Dad grasped the situation quickly, immediately made a decision, and gave out clear instructions.
I worked as an office worker in my previous life, but I never happened across bosses who would briskly promote me.

I even felt signs of the subordinate knights respecting Dad as well.

Suddenly struck with this thought, I look at Julia-kaasan.

“Ahh, the working Al-kun is also lovely!”

She said, as she was writhering about.
……In her arms, I sometimes felt as though I might slip out, so I used [Physics magic] while maintaining my posture so as to not be exposed.

After that, many other armoured knights turned up to seek instructions from Dad but he listened to the reports seriously and considered them, then issued instructions all without without losing his smile.

As one would expect after being away for two weeks, the reports were incessant.

Dad called a secretary and ordered them to guide Mum and I to the living quarters inside the fortress.

In the living quarters we were guided to, Mum and I finally were able to relax comfortably.

“Isn’t Daddy amazing~? Edgar-kun, you should watch Daddy’s working figure closely too, okay?”

“Babu!”

Later when the sun descended, Dad showed up after he finished sending the reinforcement troops out to the other fortress, and borrowing the fortress parlour, we had dinner.

It was only a simple meal because we were in the fortress, but Mum continued to gaze at Dad and ate as if it was really delicious.

Having been breastfed before the meal, I only watched, but even inside this rustic fortress, us parents and child sitting in harmony was a good thing.

Dad also said, ‘I’m glad I brought you guys,’ and pat my head.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

The day at the fortress passed just like that. Mum and I stayed a night at the fortress, planning to depart the next morning.

However, the next morning.

As we were making preparations to return home despite being loathe to part with Dad, a pale-faced knight in armour came barging in.

“What has happened?”

Dad's face had relaxed completely after exchanging kisses with Mum, but it became tense in an instant.
"——I-it's the enemy!"
"What?"
"——A group that appears to be a mercenary group is heading here from the direction of Sonora-to in preparation for war! They number two thousand at the least! From the looks of the raised banner—— it's the <Black Wolf Fang>!"
Dad raised his head to the sky.

---

10. Flame Prison Witch (Firebird)

Dad was befuddled only for a short time.

For a baby, it's quite scary when his father is anxious, so it felt much longer than that.

When dad once again came to his senses, a firm determination was showing on his face.

"——We will defend the fortress! Hurry with the withdrawal of military personnel who are outside of the fortress! When the withdrawal is done raise the drawbridge!"

"Y-Yes!"

The knights hurried off after saluting.

Dad asked the secretary, who helped with the preparations for our return, to call for an emergency assembly for all the commissioned officers within the fortress.

"Julia, Ed. Sorry, but you can't go home for a while anymore."

"It can't be helped~. ….but will it be okay?"

Mom is probably worried about the number of forces within the fortress.

The reinforcement forces to the Zakholtz Fortress already set out at night yesterday.
Their numbers were a thousand.
In fact, two-thirds of the original forces are currently away from the fortress.
Dad should've already sent an order for the town behind the fortress to dispatch soldiers, but it will most likely take a few more days for that unit to reach the Ranzrack Fortress from the town.

In other words, dad will have to defend the fortress with only 500 soldiers against, according to the reports, a more than 2000 strong mercenary group, the <Black Wolf Fang>.
<Black Wolf Fang> is a mercenary group that is notorious for pillaging as they wish, but since they are powerful, apparently people can't help but use them.

Of course abandoning the fortress and moving back the defensive line to the town is something they can't do.

They can't allow <Black Wolf Fang> to have free reign over the towns and villages behind Ranzrack Fortress (the towns and villages we traveled through on the way here).

According to my offhand knowledge from my previous life, the defending side in a siege has the overwhelming advantage and it takes about 3 to 5 times the number of soldiers to mount an assault.
This time, the difference between war potentials are 500 to 2000, so 4 times more.
However, taking into account that <Black Wolf Fang> consists of elites, it may even exceed 5 times.

We can expect the reinforcements from the town in the back, and we will also contact the unit headed for Zakholtz Fortress to return, but in any case, it will most likely take a few days for them to arrive.

Can't be called an encouraging situation by any stretch.

"Sorry….. I got you involved in this."

Dad said this to mom and lowered his head.

Julia-kaasan silently approached dad who behaved in such a way, then grabbed his shoulder and made him raise his head.

"Mou, what are you saying, Al-kun! I'm happy that I could be here today. I'm tired of just waiting around while Al-kun is fighting somewhere. I much prefer fighting together to that."

"Julia…."

Dad shows a surprised expression.

"To tell you the truth, if the times where Al-kun is at the fortress all the time and I'm home all time continued on for much longer…. I was thinking of leaving the house together with Edgar-kun."

"Wha-…..!"

Dad was at a loss for words.

Damn, I was at a loss for words.

To think that mom, who loves dad from the bottom of her heart and looks happy just by looking at his face, was thinking something like that.

Disregarding dad (and me) whose mouths were opening and closing like a goldfish's, she continued.

"But Edgar-kun made me realize. I was unhappy with Al-kun not being able to come home at all. But I didn't try to properly convey that to Al-kun. Thinking 'it's his work, it can't be helped', I always endured. Al-kun didn't realize it. No, I'm not blaming you. I didn't say anything, so it's only natural. However, Edgar-kun conveyed it to me. That if I don't say it properly you won't know. That I have to say 'I'm sad, please don't neglect me'. That dad won't notice otherwise."

As a fellow man, I find it natural that dad didn't notice it.
Having 3500 people under his command and a country in a civil war on the other side of his fortress.
With that, it's no wonder there wasn't any time to ponder about family matters.
Even then he forcefully took a leave of absence and rushed to see me by changing horses on

the way, to criticize him above all that is too harsh.

It was thanks to my bystander's point of view that I was able to notice Julia-kaasan's sadness.
I'm a newborn baby and I barely have any connection with people besides mom.
I can't take care of myself on my own, so I have to rely on mom.
In a situation like that, it's a matter of course to become sensitive to mother's feelings.

"So —— Al-kun. Please let me be by your side. Please let me fight by your side. Please let me defend your back. Because I also can fight."

"……"

No good, esteemed daddy is not breathing at all.

I sneakily use [Physical Magic] and bump a small stone from under dad's feet into his shin.

"…..n. Julia….."

After rebooting, dad grabbed both of mom's shoulders with a serious expression.

"——I'm sorry for everything thus far. I was always too busy with my work, I didn't even think about your feelings. I will correct this from now on. I'm an imperfect husband, but please don't leave me even in the future, and fight together with me —— standing right beside me."

"Al-kun….."

"Julia….."

Being entirely within their own world, mom's and dad's faces slowly neared each other——

"——khhm"

"!" "!"

Due to the sudden cough the two of them jumped a bit.

I've noticed it already quite a while ago, but now the two of them were fully surrounded at some distance by the knights of the fortress.

Well, just a short while ago an assembly order was sent out.
No wonder they gathered.

"Commander-dono, it's good and all that you have a good relationship with your wife, but shouldn't we hold a war council soon?"

Among them the oldest knight, who was around 50 years old and had mustache spoke as such.

“Ah, aah, well…..”

After being flustered for a bit, dad cleared his throat.

“Mn. Right, let’s start the war council.”

“Yes. But first a few words from myself.”

“What?”

When dad asked back, the mustached knight turned towards the other knights,

“Our Commander-dono excels in virtue, in resourcefulness, in spearmanship, and on top of that as saw it just now he is an exceptionally devoted husband! Such a wonderful Commander-dono and his family, can we allow them to be slain by petty hooligans like the <Black Wolf Fang>? The answer is absolutely not! Knight gentlemen! Let’s show those hooligans the visage of a Knight of this Kingdom!”

Ooooooooooooooooooooooo——!

The fierce shouts of the knights shook even the sturdy looking walls of the fortress.

And more than that, my eardrums, and my soul trembled.

A simple number disadvantage feels like not such a big deal anymore.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

The mercenary group showed themselves on the horizon right after the preparations for the siege were completed.

The time was mid-day.

Wearing matching black armors and helmets, the <Black Wolf Fang> broke up into a headquarters and two other groups, then slowly but surely started encircling the Ranzrack Fortress.
Just by looking at those movements it was apparent that the <Black Wolf Fang> boasted of a higher expertise than a normal mercenary group.

Me, mom and dad are standing on top of the fortress walls watching the state of the <Black Wolf Fang>’s headquarters.

About the matter of bringing me to a battlefield there were of course people who brought it up, but

“Because the safest place is by my side.”

Since Julia-kaasan casually declared it like that, I was attached to mom’s back.

I'm not a child that cries at random, was apparently one of the reasons for that.

Julia-kaasan is a former A class adventurer and has the nickname of《Flame Prison Witch》.

Also serving as a review, let's use [Appraise] on her once more.

《
Julia Cherbl (Wife of Viscount Cherbl《Flame Prison Witch》)

20 years old

Level 47
HP 79/79
MP 253/253

Skills
•Master class (Skills unlocked by diligent training.)
[Fire Element Magic] 4
[Mana Control] 4

•General
[Fire Magic] 7
[Water Magic] 3
[Wind Magic] 3
[Earth Magic] 2
[Light Magic] 3
[Telekinesis Magic] 2
[Mana Manipulation] 5
[Mana Perception] 6
[Simultaneous Invocation] 3
》

Yeah, it's amazing no matter how many times I see it.

For comparison I try to [Appraise] one of the knight running around on the fortress walls.

《Thomas Pieper (Knight | Santamana Third Area Army | 23rd Platoon Captain)

24 years old

Level 19
HP 35/35
MP 11/11

Skills
•General
[Sword Skills] 5
[Spear Skills] 3

[Horse Riding Skills] 4
[Water Magic] 1
》

It's really unfavorable when compared to mom, but even with this, he belongs to the more skilled group among the knights around here.
Even the skills, there are not many here that have a skill level above 5.
Also, while being a platoon captain, he doesn't even have the [Command] skill yet.

So I can't say that mom's 'I will fight beside you' was a figure of speech.
Or rather, it's absolutely not a figure of speech, 100% serious, should be taken just as it says on the box.

Concerning that, Julia-kaasan declared her resolve as such.

"—— I'm a bit seriously angry now. Trying to take the fortress that Al-kun is defending, it's like they are making fun of Al-kun. I will absolutely not forgive that. That black dog, or whatever it's called, mercenary group….. I will not let a single one of them escape."

The《Flame Prison Witch》has completely snapped.
It's scary, try to be in the shoes of someone on your back!

While I was being scared of mother, there was movement within the <Black Wolf Fang>.

They didn't ask for surrender or declare war at all.

With the same ease as they pillaged towns and villages on the battlefield, they started to shoot their bows at the fortress from the other side of the moat.
Taking into consideration the paper thin possibility that they were trying to gain protection because of a lack of food there were no attacks from the fortress, but since they started it first there should be no problem.
Arrows and spells were released from the fortress, but by that time the mercenaries fell back to the rear, so not much damage was dealt.
There are no casualties on our side yet either.

That wait-and-see state continued on for a while, but they finally got impatient, or maybe grasped the extent of our forces, and the mercenary group started assaulting the fortress with all their detached forces at the same time from every direction.

Wielding an about 10-meter long ladder, the mercenaries rushed towards the moat under a rain of arrows and spells, and tried to put it to the fortress wall.
The width of the moat is 5 meter and the height of the wall is 10 meter, so if they try to place it diagonally the length won't be enough.
They apparently had a strategy of overcoming that shortcoming by bridging the moat, but the fortress side wouldn't let it simply happen and shot down the mercenaries with arrows and destroyed the bridge with magic.

The unlucky mercenaries got hit in the face with an arrow and tumbled towards the fortress

wall or the hard ground, the lucky ones got shot in the shoulder or arm and dived into the moat.
Just as dad boasted, the water level in the moat is perfectly set, so that once someone falls in, it's very hard to get out without help from outside.
Oil was poured by the knights of the fortress to places where mercenaries gathered in the moat, then burned those who couldn't move out of the way.
In addition to the smell of blood, now the nasty smell of burnt flesh was also enveloping the battlefield.

To a modern Japanese person, this scene should be something horrible to look at.
But for some reason, I didn't find it that unbearable.
Perhaps the mental fatigue is also negated by the [No Fatigue] skill.
In turn, one can say that it's such a mentally scarring sight that the [No Fatigue] skill has to activate.

It's not something that should even remotely be allowed to be seen by a half-year-old child, but even if they look kind, they are still a soldier and a former adventurer.

On the top of the fortress wall, Julia-kaasan is shooting her strong suit [Fire Magic] under the orders of dad.

"——ル(Converge)・ト(Flame) ,《Flame Lance》!"

A bright beam of light flashed, and two mercenaries who tried to grab onto the fortress wall have been skewered.
The flame lance continued right on until it impacted the ground, then it exploded, covering a few mercenaries in flames.

It's a two letter invocation technique that is described in the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』, but only that doesn't make it this powerful.

I think Julia-kaasan uses her Master class skill [Flame Element Magic] to greatly increase her two letter invocation's power.

It's become clear that the mercenaries do falter in the face of mom's magic.

But, as expected of mercenaries who lived through many battles, they signaled the nearby archers, who then focused their shots on mom.
Mom, who is not the least bit inferior in experience, calmly took cover behind the wall, but at this rate, she won't be able to aim her spells.
Using this opportunity, the mercenaries closed in, bringing new ladders from the back, trying to once again brave the fortress walls.

"Mou~, so aggravating!"

With nimble movements that were unthinkable from her usual self, she made her way from one cover to the next, shooting ト(Flame) ,《Flame Bit》 spells towards the mercenaries, keeping them in check.

One letter invocation is the limit while moving, so mom's spells only served as a diversion.
Even so, mom alone could suppress 10 mercenaries at a time, so it's plenty amazing as it is.

But, at that time——

"It's a catapult!"

From the depths of the <Black Wolf Fang>'s headquarters, a big craft is being pulled forwards.
On the craft is an around 5-meter long see-saw-like object.
Like someone already shouted, it was clearly a catapult.
The catapult got bent as it was loaded with a boulder, and in the next moment, a boulder of approximately 1 meter was sent flying!

Furthermore, it was on a direct hit course towards Julia-kaasan(and me)!

"Kh….!"

As expected, the more and more panicking mom started using ♭ (Physik) on the boulder to interfere with it, but the spell will most likely not make it in time.

The giant boulder was already in front of our eyes——

"Baabu!"

In front of my eyes, the giant boulder has come to a halt.

[Physical Magic] and [Letterless Invocation] was used together for 20MP——, but that wasn't even enough so in the end [Physical Magic] took away 3 invocations' worth of mana, 40MP in total.

And then I used [Physical Magic] once more.
♭ (Physik), ♭ (Physik), ♭ (Physik)
No, I poured in not one, but 3 invocations' worth of MP.

The giant boulder reversed its course in mid-air, and on the same trajectory it flew back——

Dogoguwaaaa!

and with a tremendous sound, it destroyed the catapult.
There were two mercenaries who got crushed by the giant boulder and it seems there were a few others that were hit by the scattering broken pieces of the catapult.

Julia-kaasan looked back at me, who was still holding his hands in the air, with an astonished expression.

"Edgar-kun, you really saved me there. Thank you~. I didn't think you could do something like this too."

Mom said while looking at the place where the catapult used to be.

The mercenaries apparently lost their nerves with that boulder back toss and were looking at me(at Julia-kaasan to be precise) with dumbfounded expressions.

It's a perfect chance to attack, but the soldiers of the fortress side are also looking towards Julia-kaasan looking surprised.
During that time, a leader looking mercenary gathered his allies and started concentrating their fire on mom.

The mercenaries, and as a matter of fact the fortress soldiers too, are probably thinking that that was done by mom.
With a desperate expression, the mercenaries shot their arrows towards mom, and the fortress soldiers were roused by the mustached soldier yelling 'Commander-dono's esteemed wife has taught them a lesson!' and were shouting battle cries.
….well, they wouldn't think that the half-year-old child hanging on mom's back is the one who did it, would they?

"A-Are you alright!?"

Dad rushed over to us in haste from a small distance away where he was giving commands according to the overall situation.

"Yeah, we are alright. Because Edgar-kun protected us."

"Wha-….., then that was, done by Ed!?"

"Baabu"

Huhun, I tried holding my head high.

"W-well ok. If you are alright that all that matters. I didn't think that a simple mercenary group could prepare a catapult. They probably seized it from some battlefield."

According to the knight that were sent out to scout, there were no more apparent catapults near their headquarters or with their detached units.
Glancing at dad, who returned to the command position after making sure we were unharmed, mom starts talking to me.

"Edgar-kun, can you protect mom for a while?"

Probably wants me to buy some time for a big move.
Big move. Does that mean that she has spells more powerful than the previous《Flame Lance》?
I want to see that.

"Baabu!"

Leave it to me! After crying that I write multiple ♭ (Physik) letters one after the other.
By the way, thanks to [No Fatigue] the MP I used before has already recovered.
With my current MP, after 10 seconds it starts to recover and 5 seconds after that it's fully restored.

It's a bit strange in the midst of battle, but let's look at my Status.

《Edgar Chrebl

Level 1

HP 4/4
MP 649/649

Skills
•Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

•Legendary class
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –

•Master class
[Physical Magic] 3
[Mana Control] 3
[Letterless Invocation] 4

•General
[Fire Magic] 1
[Water Magic] 1
[Wind Magic] 1
[Earth Magic] 1
[Light Magic] 1
[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Telekinesis Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Simultaneous Invocation] 9 (MAX)

《Goddess of Virtue's Blessing》
》

The plan of raising my maximum MP along the way here has paid off, my current maximum MP is 649.
It has grown to approximately 2.5 times higher than Julia-kaasan's (253).

Ah, we should know Julia-kaasan's MP values too.

《Julia Chrebl. HP: 79/79, MP: 210/253》

Hn, it's good that she is unhurt.

Now then, under the rain of falling arrows mom has started concentrating on that 'big move'.
Even in this situation, she boldly closed her eyes, not showing any signs of paying attention to anything in the outside world.
What would you do if I couldn't protect you?

If I'm trusted that much, then I have no choice but do it, so I invoke the 10 ♭ (Physik) and send back all the incoming arrows that would hit mom to the shooters.

After making sounds of cutting the air as they fly through the sky, the arrows pierce the shooters' face or head.
Unlike with the boulder, there was a feeling of killing with my own hands, but it too late to think about it now.
Bearing with the welling up nausea, I refocused my mind.

About one minute went by with me buying time.
Mom suddenly opened her eyes, started writing shining letters in the air and started mumbling some very dangerous sounding incantation.

"——ト・ソ・ソ・ト・ト・λ・λ(Flame! Become a whirlwind that burns away everything!)——《Fire Storm》!"

7 letters…..you say?

Leaving aside the astounded me, an enormous amount of mana burst out from mom's body and encircled a group of mercenaries that were bunched up in front of the fortress walls.
The mana started swirling around the bewildered mercenaries and steadily increased its speed——

Bowaa….

All the mana turned into radiant flames at once.

The mercenaries that were surrounded by the flames started to panic, but it's already too late.

Increasing their power the radiant flames started to rampage, turning into a scorching flame whirlwind and swallowing up the mercenary group.

Turning into a tornado, the blazing tempest started swaying and wiggling towards the mercenary headquarters, but regrettably only grazed it in the end.
Even then the tents of the headquarters got picked up by the wind—— and even the mercenaries within them got sucked up by the tornado.

After utterly laying waste to the headquarters of the <Black Wolf Fang>, the blazing tornado slowly dropped its speed and was extinguished as it disappeared into the wind.

“Baabufua, baubaufuo mafuo…..!”
(This is, the《Flame Prison Witch》……!)

Of course the mercenaries, who lost their headquarters, were in a daze, but the fortress knights were also flabbergasted by the situation.

——With this, the direction of the battle was decided.

That was what everyone was thinking, but…..

| TOC |

11. Peerless 0.5 year old Baby

After casting such large-scale magic, Mum staggered feebly and fell to her knees.

[Appraisal].

《Julia Chrebl. HP: 79 / 79, MP: 107 / 253.》

Her MP was at 210 before using the magic, which means the《Fire Storm》just then actually used up 103 MP.
As far as it goes, her remaining MP is enough for one more attack, but there might be situations in which she would want to use spells for diversion purposes, so it's better to assume that there won't be another shot of that spell unless we are greatly cornered.

That said, the enemy camp was shredded by the《Fire Storm》, and it appeared as though at least a hundred mercenaries were caught up in the technique and became unable to fight.

Originally, the <Black Wolf Fang> split into three squads to encircle the fortress and attacked in waves.
And so, the command base and the troops before it should total a little over 700.
In regards to the damage sustained by the enemy side, there were just over 100 soldiers from Mum's magic, and dozens of soldiers from the defences of the fortress knights.
It might not reach 200 but the damage we caused should be close to that.
The base had also been burnt to a crisp from the fire tornado, and I could see that chaos had arisen in the chain of command, even from here.

That's why I believed that the mercenaries will retreat from here temporarily.
If they bear the full brunt of battle while in chaos, their numbers will just decrease without being able to do anything.

However, my prediction was off.

From the vicinity of the scattered encampment, one of the men slowly rose, picked up the carbonised spear lying beside him, took aim at the heavily breathing Julia-kaasan, and threw with all his strength.

If it was just that, I would have thought that it was merely an act of desperation, but the spear rotated with a terrifying force as it flew this way in a straight line.

"——Babu!"

At once, I tried to use [Physics Magic] and [Letterless Invocation] to catch the spear but——

"Buu!?" (Wha!)

A bizarre feeling was transmitted through the invoked magic.
The flying spear was rotating quickly, while appearing to bite a hole in my fired [Physics

Magic].
Looking closely, the spear had some kind of black lightning coiling around it.
From that lightning came an extraordinarily sinister presence.
Then, I suddenly hit upon a good idea.
[Appraisal]!

《〔Damaged〕Iron Lance. Stats: Dark enchantment, Lightning enchantment, Deadly Curse enchantment. Made with Goleth's (ゴレス) [Enchant Magic] 9 skill.》

Wh-what is this!?

No, anyhow, I understood that it was something dangerous.
I used [Simultaneous Invocation] and further layered on more ♭ spells.
I stacked ♭ 2, 3, 4, 5…. a total of 9 times, before the spear finally ceased its movement.
[Appraisal].

《〔Ruined〕Iron Lance. Stats: Dark enchantment, Lightning enchantment. Made with Goleth's [Enchant Magic] 9 skill.》

One of the enchanted states produced by [Enchant Magic] disappeared, but the other two remain.
I invoke ♭ an additional 5 times and return the spear that was floating in the air, aiming at the mercenary who threw it.
I think it moved with a similar speed to how it did when it came.
That spear——

Bam!
With that sound, it exploded in midair.

I wasn't sure what happened for a moment, but I understood when I saw the mercenary's stance.

——The mercenary had promptly thrown another spear and intercepted the returning spear.

It's a lie, right?

I strain my eyes at the mercenary who was only the size of a fingernail when seen from here, and then used [Appraisal].

《Goleth (Mercenary group <Black Wolf Fang> leader |《Goleth of the Lance》|《Wolf of the battlefield》|《Pillaging Brigade》)
39 years old
Half Dwarf
Half Demon (A being who transformed into a half-demon with a curse from the evil god)

Level 51
HP 379 / 379 (129 + 250)
MP 229 / 259 (9 + 250)

Skills
• Master class
[Lance Spearmanship] 5
+ [Enchant Magic + 1] 9 (MAX) (Able to add magic to weapons/armour. Due to the evil god's curse, the unlearned [Dark Magic] [Lightning Magic][Deadly Curse] skills can be used, but only with this skill.)
+ [Toughness] 9 (MAX) (It becomes hard to feel pain and fatigue during combat)

• General
[Lance Skills] 9 (MAX)
[Spear Skills] 7
[Battleaxe Skills] 5
[Unarmed Combat Skills] 5

<The Evil God's Curse of Calamity> (This one's body sustained the curse of Monguenues, the evil god, and was able to obtain Add〔Enchantment〕to his status and skills. The additions require a sacrifice of 10 years of one's lifespan × number of additions.)》

Ah, I clearly understood it.
This guy is a genuine freak.
If this guy was a boss then of course he would think that the fortress could fall.

It seems that after devoting himself to the evil god, Goleth received the benefit of 'Add'.
On top of the huge strengthening to his status, there are two additional Master Class skills.
The terror of these statuses and skills probably have no need to be explained.
As may be expected from a sacrifice of ten years of one's lifespan, the increased statuses, as well as the type of skill, were quite monstrous.
Well, [Toughness] looks like a lesser form of [No Fatigue] though.

Julia-kaasan also seemed to notice the dangers of this guy and her face paled.
Well, anaemia-like symptoms had temporarily appeared due to the sudden decrease of MP anyway.

Even so, Mum stood up firmly, sternly scowling at the mercenary — the <Black Wolf Fang> group leader, Goleth of the lance.

However, Mum.
This guy is my prey.
He mightn't be the slasher himself, but he's unmistakably a man of the evil god's side.

I untie the cord that fastened me to my mother's back, and float in the air with [Physics Magic].
Then, I come out before Mum and confront Goleth directly.

At the surreal sight of a baby floating in the air above the ramparts, the atmosphere of the surroundings stilled.
Goleth's filthy, unshaven square jaw was partly opened and he was cocking his head in confusion, while Mum forgot to breath in astonishment. The fortress knights nearby also stared at me with blank faces.

The first to recover was Goleth. He took a lance from the subordinate-looking mercenary standing beside him and hurled it at me.
Because he was incredulous, the lance he fired had no [Enchant Magic] cast on it.
I received the spear, casting ♭ with ease, and sent it back towards Goleth—— No, it had been shifted slightly and was thrown back at the subordinate-looking mercenary standing next to him.
Without erring, the lance hit the mercenary and his upper body was blasted away without leaving a trace.

Goleth grinned as he was covered in his subordinate's blood, due to him standing so close.

Goleth caught some other mercenaries and shouted something at them.
He was likely telling them to bring him lances.
Because he was singlehandedly beating them to death, the other mercenaries were shrinking back and didn't dare approach him.

In that time, I was also searching the surroundings to see whether there was anything I could throw.

There were.
Lying here and there on the ramparts were stones and bricks used to drop on enemies clinging to the castle walls.

I cast [Physics Magic] on a number of them and thinking that 'victory goes to the one who makes the first move', I hurl them towards Goleth.

Some of the bricks crumbled in midair as if they had been travelling too fast, but an armful of stones rushed at Goleth and his followers in succession.
Goleth smashed the stones flying at him with his fists, but his followers had no way to do so, receiving stones to their heads and dying, spraying grey matter all around them.

Continuing, I adjust the speed and scatter smallish rocks and bricks in Goleth's surroundings.
Although I say I adjusted the speed, the speed was still faster than a powerful fast ball pitched by a major league player, so the flying rocks and bricks still carried plenty of lethal

power.
Several mercenaries received them directly and fainted in their spot (the possibility of their death is high too).

Losing his patience, Goleth personally took out a bunch of lances from their base and shouted some things at the subordinates.
As the subordinates withdrew with relieved expressions, I presume that he said something along the lines of 'you're in the way, so move'.

Goleth crushed the rocks and bricks I hailed on him with one hand while he cast [Enchant Magic] on the lance he grasped in his other hand.
In the end, the charging of the lance was completed without the rocks I threw causing any damage to Goleth.

Boom——!!
The lance was released from Goleth's arm, along with the sound of air splitting.

While gradually decelerating its speed with [Physics Magic], I increase the horizontal force little by little.
The lance passes by my side, and then after turning around in a large circle, I again increase its speed and redirect it towards Goleth.

Goleth tried to dodge the spear by a hair's breadth, but naturally, I saw through it.
Just before impact, I invoke several additional ♭ and coercively change the trajectory, aiming at Goleth from right overhead.

But regrettably, Goleth leapt back to avoid the spear at the last moment.
The spear seemed to graze his armour, producing an unpleasant screeching sound, and the armour broke off from Goleth's body immediately afterwards.
Like the armour, the floor was also crushed from the impact when the spear collided with it.

Seeing that as a chance, I toss rocks and bricks without a moment's delay, but as expected, Goleth destroys them with one hand while preparing his next spear.

Understanding that the rocks and bricks won't get through any more, the ones I had already cast [Physics Magic] on were aimed at enemy soldiers in a convenient location and thrown, disposing of the soldiers.
The blockhead soldiers who were watching the exchange between Goleth and I collapsed dumbfoundedly, their heads looking like pomegranates.

In the meantime, Goleth's charging had finished, and the second lance comes flying.
I suppose him not looking worn-out is an effect of [Toughness].

I intercept that attack with several ♭, and fling it back with plenty of composure.
Goleth counterattacks by throwing a spear with the minimum [Enchant Magic] cast on it, diverting the course of the spear and evading it.
In that time, I once again use [Appraisal] on Goleth.

《Goleth. HP: 341 / 379, MP: 189 / 259》

Hmm. So one use of [Enchant Magic] uses 30 MP.
Because the lowest cost for a Master Class magic skill is 10, I calculate the first attempt to have cost 30, the counterattack just then taking 10, and the second lance using 30.

The decrease in HP was probably because damage was inflicted on his body from the attack that broke his armour just now.
Goleth hadn't been disturbed so I had thought for sure that he didn't sustain any damage.
Was that also a benefit of [Toughness]?

While I was doing that, Goleth took a bundle of 5~6 lances and started casting [Enchant Magic] on them all in one go.
I see, it won't be settled at this rate.

Thinking that it would be hard to move in that condition, I once again pick up some rocks and throw them at Goleth.

Goleth smashed several rocks with one hand, but it seems he decided it was too bothersome midway and proceeds to ignore them.

My thrown rocks hit Goleth, but I didn't see him even wince at all. [Appraisal].

《Goleth.HP: 171 / 379, MP: 59 / 259 (9 + 250) 》

Alright. Damage has been properly accumulated.

Goleth, who finished charging the spears, finally throws spears towards me.
I didn't stall them all, there were two directly in front of me, and one flying at the walls a little below me.

It was possible to simultaneously catch them all.

However, I purposely caught one of the spears in front of me with [Physics Magic], avoided the other spear by making it 'fall' from the sky, and decided to disregard the one aimed at the walls.
Naturally, that was after making sure that those spears wouldn't hit Julia-kaasan or the other knights.

In regards to the events following, the moment I landed on top of the ramparts, my foothold broke, and I fell from the walls without even being able to float in the air.

"Edgar-ku… n……!"

I heard Julia-kaasan's screams stretch out midway.

That was because I used [Physics Magic] and *accelerated* the drop, evading the fourth and fifth lances thrown at me successively.

Then I forcibly shifted my course forward as I imbued the first lance that I grabbed with all the MP I have——

Woooosh!
Together with the record-breaking sound of cutting wind, the discharged lance hits Goleth's torso, who was unable to react.

Surprisingly, Goleth catches the spear.

However, the momentum was hard to suppress and Goleth was repelled backwards with a tremendous force.
As he bounced off the ground several times, I saw Goleth's feet, from his ankles, tear off and fly away.
Losing his ankles and being unable to land, Goleth maintained a spinning state and each time he made contact with the ground, flesh and blood would be scattered from the exposed part as he tumbled far beyond the battlefield.
He moved too far away, so my eyes were unable to confirm Goleth's condition but——

[Appraisal].

《Goleth. HP: 0 / 379, MP: 0 259. Condition: deceased.》

When I viewed his status,

《〔Goleth's〕Corpse.》

was what it had changed to.

---

12. Growth Sleep (Firebird)

After losing its leader, the <Black Wolf Fang> was brittle.

As I descended onto the fortress after bringing down Goleth,

“——The Head of the enemy got taken down! Raise the shouts of victory!”

UOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Under the orders of the mustached knight, the knights of the fortress thrusted their weapons towards the sky and shouted victoriously.

The mercenaries, who were desperately trying to climb up the fortress before, now scrambled to run away.

Their backs were showered by arrows and spells from the fortress.

“You’ve done well, Edgar-kun! But don’t do anything reckless like that in the future, okay?”

“Ai!”

Julia-kaasan said this, then started the chant for a spell while hugging me.

“——ト・ソ・ソ・ト・ト・λ・λ(Flame! Become a whirlwind that burns away everything!)——《Fire Storm》!”

There it is,《Fire Storm》!
There was no need to conserve MP anymore and there is no-one to disturb the chant.
As expected, an accurate decision based on the circumstances.

《Fire Storm》struck on the vanguard of the group of escaping mercenaries.
A storm of fire suddenly appeared from the direction they were running towards, so the mercenaries are falling into chaos.

“——I said, I will not let a single one of you escape, right?”

Mom had a wide grin on while saying this.

Scary as hell.

“——My wife took down the Head of the enemy! Brave warriors of Ranzrack Fortress, now is the time to show the spirit of a knight! Everyone, chaaaaarge!”

Before I noticed, dad took the lead of a cavalry unit and mounted an assault against the disordered mercenaries to doubly make sure.
The mercenaries are taken down without anything that can be called resistance.

At any rate, the mercenaries are very brittle, most likely Goleth used his ability and fear to

unify the mercenaries.
No matter if they are powerful, a pillaging mercenary group that only cares about their own interests is probably not something that usually would try to take a fortress by themselves, right?
As the battle before showed, there is a minimum casualty count to assault a fortress no matter what.
If it's an official army then it's understandable, but it's a bit hard to imagine that mercenaries with only pillaging on their mind would try to take a fortress with the resolve to even sacrifice themselves.
It should be appropriate to assume that Goleth with that《The Evil God's Curse of Calamity》thing bound them with fear.

But Goleth died.
There is nothing that binds the mercenaries to the battlefield anymore.
Of course they start running.

There is no way a mercenary would serve as a rear guard in this circumstance.
Dad and the knight of the fortress are cutting the mercenaries' heads of like they are harvesting wheat.
——The battle is over.

"….huh? Edgar-kun?"

Julia-kaasan's voice feels distant.

"Sleepy-time, huh. Still a baby after all~"

Her voice feels even more distant.

"My Lady, it was a superb display of fighting prowess."

It's dark so it's hard to see, but it seems it's the mustached knight.
Since dad is outside hunting down the remnants, the mustached knight was probably put in charge of the fortress.
…..I want to [Appraise] him too, but …… I'm sleepy.
"——Also the child of you two. Looking at his sleeping face like this, the fierce god like efforts of his from before are hard to believe."

…hn? Sleepy….? Why am I [sleepy]?
I have the [No Fatigue] skill I got from the Goddess….
"Those knights who saw the fight from nearby think that calling Edgar-dono a baby is too disrespectful, so some of them said that calling him Baby Scarlet would be fitting."[1]

No good, I can't think anymore.

"….Baby…..rlet, that……ick name….might……"

My consciousness is fading away.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

When I came to, I was in a familiar space.

The vacuum of space where Marquekt is visible below, it should be clear if I describe it this way.

Yes, after I was stabbed by the slasher and it turned out I would be reincarnated in another world, this is where I met the Goddess that time.
The Goddess simply appeared from nowhere at all.

“——The one you dropped in the lake was this Golden [Enchant Magic]? Or maybe this Silver [Toughness]?”

To the Goddess, who acted out some unknown scene as the first thing after meeting,

“Did your personality change in the short while since our last meeting?”

“You meanie. Even though this is our first meeting in a long time.”

“You say a long time, but …. wasn’t it about 20 days?”

Between waking up after reincarnating and the battle of Ranzrack Fortress, about that many days should have passed.

But the Goddess shook her head.

“To be precise, 1 year 4 month and 20 days.”

“1 year 4 month? …ah, counting from the conception.”

It was 1 year 4 month and 20 days ago when Alfred-tousan and Julia-kaasan did the XX, and I was conceived.

10 month after that, Julia-kaasan gave birth to me, then 6 months after birth was the point in time when I regained my consciousness as a reincarnated person.
And after that, 20 days have passed until the battle of Ranzrack Fortress

“Then, that means I didn’t steal the body of a previously existing fetus, right?”

“Of course that is right. I would like you to trust more in the power of the God that governs the endless cycle of death and rebirth.”

“Well, sorry about that. I thought it should be alright if you are the one handling it, but ….”

I suddenly realized.
I can speak normally now, right?

In a panic, I look over my body, but my body is still a baby.

"….so, what is with this situation exactly? I didn't die, right?"

The Goddess nodded.

"Of course. Your current state is called『Growth Sleep』"

"Growth sleep?"

"Right. When it's time for a level up, the people of Marquekt are assaulted by a desperate need for sleep, then enter a state of deep sleep, called『Growth Sleep』. With this Growth Sleep, they adapt their body to the newfound power brought by the level up."

"In other words, since my level went up, my body demanded sleep to cope with it."

"Not quite right. You reach a state where you can level up, then after experiencing the Growth Sleep, your level goes up as a result."

"….I don't understand the difference."

"Let's see, take a look at your status for a bit."

As the Goddess said, I used [Appraise] on myself.

《Edgar Chrebl (Viscount Chrebl's fourth son, Noble of Santamana Kingdom,《Baby Scarlet》

Level 1/31 (Level up standby state)
HP 63/63
MP 752/752

Condition Growth Sleep

Skills
•Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

•Legendary class
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –

•Master class
[Physical Magic] 5
[Mana Control] 4
[Letterless Invocation] 5

•General
[Lance Throwing Technique] 1
[Fire Magic] 1

[Water Magic] 1
[Wind Magic] 1
[Earth Magic] 1
[Light Magic] 1
[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Telekinesis Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Simultaneous Invocation] 9 (MAX)

《Goddess of Virtue's Blessing》

》

Certainly the 'Level up standby state' is there, but …. 31?
Also, what the hell is that《Baby Scarlet》?

"You defeated many mercenaries with Goleth, an Apostle of the Evil God, on the top of the list. Moreover, as level 1. Of course it would go up at least that much."

The Goddess says.

"That's right, I wanted to ask about that.《The Evil God's Curse of Calamity》was it? What on earth it that?"

"There is nothing more than what you've found out with [Appraise]. The Evil God contacts people who are fitting and grants them various kinds of powers in exchange for a part of their lifespan. As expected, since it's gained by exchanging their lifespan, its effect can only be described as powerful. Since the same extreme piling up of abilities can't be done with a Blessing on the Virtue side it's really troubling."

'It is really good that you defeated him', the Goddess said.

"He is different from the what's-his-name slasher, right?"

"Kizaki Tooru, right. But then, in this life he was probably given a different name. Yes, that is right. The Apostle this time is an entirely different matter from Kizaki. The fact that you happened upon it was also by chance."

"You didn't set it up for it to happen this way, right?"

"I don't have that kind of power. Since the one who governs fate is a different God. The only things I can do are in the domain of souls."

"The domain of souls…..?"

"Reincarnation and the bestowal of skills."

"Why are skills related to souls?"

"To explain that, first I need to talk about what skills are."

“Please, by all means!”

I vigorously asked the Goddess.
Well, it’s a chance I can’t let escape.
I can hear about what skills are from the Goddess that governs skills, you know?

The Goddess started talking after clearing her throat with surprisingly cute ‘ehen’.

“——first, what do you understand about skills?”

“Isn’t it a certificate that proves ‘I have learned this kind of technique or magic!’, or something like that?”

“No”

The Goddess brought over a whiteboard for newscasters from absolutely nowhere, and hit its surface with a board marker’s back end, making a *kotsu kotsu* sound.

“Skills are in fact rewards from the Gods.”

“Rewards?”

I got confused by that unexpected word.

“In proportion to the degree of acquisition of expertise, from the Gods —— well, mainly from me, a power of God is granted. This power of God and the person’s own polished expertise harmonize together and make what is known as a Skill.”

“The power of God…..”

“We simply call it「Power」, but if it’s difficult to understand, then let’s see…. right, you can call it a Gift.”

In other words,

Skill = that person’s expertise + Gift

is what it comes down to.

“If you ask for what reason are we doing this, then the answer is obviously to enable people to oppose monsters and the Evil God. People with only their expertise and inborn physical abilities are no match for monsters in any way, not to mention the Evil God. Therefore, we send people Gifts, raise their expertise and physical abilities, and have them gain the ability to fight monsters.”

People acquire「Skills」after receiving Gifts based on their expertise,
and people also acquire「Status Points」(HP and MP) after receiving Gifts based on their physical abilities.
Skills and Status Points are cataloged in something called「Status」, which can be viewed by

Skills such as [Appraise], and it is something like a report card from the Gods (as the Goddess explained).

"But if you can do that, why not send much more Gifts and strengthen the people?"

"If we could do that then would be no need for these troubles. To begin with, do you know where the Gods' power come from that is used in those Gifts?"

"Used in Gifts…."

In short, where does that power come from that should be granted in times of level up?

If that's the case——

"….experience points!"

"There you have it. Well, in this world there is no such concept as『Experience Points』, but rather the power of the Evil God that is enclosed in the Statuses of monsters and villainous people is released when they are defeated, something like that. At any rate, if a monster or villainous person is defeated, a part of the power from their Statuses circles back to me. With my power, I purify that power of the Evil God that has circled back to me and I share a part of it as a Gift with the one that defeated that being."

Conversely, if the Evil God side defeats someone from the Virtue side, then the power from their Statuses ends up absorbed by the Evil God side.
In this way, the Gods of Virtue and the Evil God distribute those Gifts(or Curses in case of the Evil God) and strengthen their followers.
And then, with those strengthened followers they defeat the other side's followers and take the power of their Statuses.
In this way, they fight over this limited resource called「Power」, and try to expand their influence and compete with each other.
"Here I return to the original topic"

The Goddess extended both her hands in front of me.
In one of her hands is some semi-transparent mana, whirling in complicated ways, and in the other hand a pink colored heart looking thing, that is beating strongly.
[Appraise].

《Gift of [Enchant Magic]》

《Gift of [Toughness]》

Uh huh, a Golden Gift and a Silver Gift.

| TOC |

TL notes:

[1] : Baby Scarlet is《赫ん坊》(something like glowing or brilliant or generally awesome baby) in the original text, which is read the same as 赤ん坊, which just infant/baby. Also the 赤 kanji means red/scarlet, and this is doubled to make the 赫, the first kanji in Baby Scarlet. The Baby Scarlet name is written in furigana so when the characters speak it is said this way, but the deeper meaning is conveyed with the kanji version.

13. Golden Gift, Silver Gift

"This is something I purified from the Curses released by Goleth, the evil god's apostle.
I also tried to purify the Curse that added〔Enchantment〕to HP and MP, but that was originally something that was forcibly added by shaving off Goleth's lifespan, so I couldn't turn it into a form I could bestow to you."

"……Would you give me both if I said I didn't want either?"

"I would very much like to do that, but my power will also be consumed even when purifying an apostle. Which skill would you like?"

[Enchant Magic] or [Toughness], huh.
If I had to choose one,

"Then I'll go with [Enchant Magic]."

I extend my hand towards the vortex of magic.
The vortex slowly dissipates as it gets sucked into my body.

[Toughness] is squashed as the goddess kneads it with both hands, and is then compressed to the size of a marble and tossed into her mouth.

Given that a component of [Toughness] seems to prevent one from staggering even when they have received an attack, it's basically a lesser form of [No Fatigue] so I didn't feel much regret.
It only prevents staggering, and damage is still sustained so I don't think it's of much use as an infant.

"And about the《Evil God's Curse of Calamity》. I also purified that, but it's difficult to make it into a Gift for a skill or stat so I'll just use it to enhance your《Goddess of Virtue's Blessing》."

The goddess brings her face close to me, and kisses my cheek.

But even though I say that, my form is that of an infant. The image it produced was no more than a woman giving a kiss to a baby because of its adorableness.

[Appraisal].

《Edgar Chrebl (Viscount Chrebl's fourth son | Noble of Santamana Kingdom |《Baby Scarlet》)

Level 1/31 (Awaiting Level Up)
HP 63/63

MP 752/752

State: Growth Sleep

Skills
• Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

• Legendary class
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –

• Master class
[Physics Magic] 5
[Enchant Magic] 1
[Mana Control] 4
[Letterless Invocation] 5

• General
[Throwing Spear Skills] 1
[Fire Magic] 1
[Water Magic] 1
[Wind Magic] 1
[Earth Magic] 1
[Light Magic] 1
[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Telekinesis Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Simultaneous Invocation] 9 (MAX)

《Goddess of Virtue's Blessing +1》(The blessing of the goddess who governs the transmigration of souls, Atrazenec. Accelerates the soul's growth. Releases all skill acquisition conditions. Medium compensation for the skills' learning | growth.) 》

Hmm.
The blessing has certainly been enhanced; the compensation for the skills' learning and growth has been increased to medium.
I think [Enchant Magic] had reached counter stop when Goleth used it, but it has returned to level 1 for me.
Because a Gift becomes a skill after harmonising with the expertise of the person themself, it starts at level 1 when it is bestowed to me, who has no experience with [Enchant Magic].

……Also, I didn't notice it before, but [Throwing Spear Skills] has been added normally.
It might be because I used [Physics Magic] to throw Goleth's spears back. Even that was treated as throwing a spear, huh.

It seems experimenting to see what counts as ‘spear throwing’ will be fun.

“Now then, I suppose this is it. Do you have any questions?”

I wonder if something happened.
I think there won’t be many opportunities like this, so I should ask what I can.

“I still don’t know what happened to the slasher after he was reincarnated, nor his name in this life.”

“Yes. I apologise. However, it’s true that he was reincarnated into a baby just like you, so you shouldn’t meet until much later.”

“What is《Baby Scarlet》?”

“That’s a nickname. The acquisition condition is for a certain number of people to use that name to refer to you with feelings of awe.”

“How long will this growth sleep last?”

“For a normal person, it would be their level × 3 hours. In your case, [No Fatigue] is functioning so it should be around 10 minutes per level.”

My level is rising by 30, which means I will be sleeping for 300 minutes — 5 hours.

“Speaking of 10 minutes, I wonder if it’s alright to think of it as the same when I exhaust all my MP and faint?”

“You are perceptive. It’s exactly that.
However, increasing one’s Mana pool through MP exhaustion is something that only occurs among people with《Virtuous Gods’ Blessing》《Evil God’s Curse of Calamity》, or those who possess a nickname related to magic.
In regards to those close to you, you and your mother may increase your maximum MP in this way, but it’s impossible for your father.’

“Is Growth Sleep necessary even when skill levels increase?”

“There are cases when it becomes necessary according to the situation, but fundamentally, the renewal of skills occur during one’s sleep at night.
For you, there is no need to sleep, so the same process is carried out by the [No Fatigue] skill while you are awake .”

“What the heck is up with that ‘no need to sleep’ thing?
I heard that in the previous world, sleep is absolutely necessary for living creatures of a certain level of complexity.”

“In your case, the effects of the skill serve as a substitute for the vital functions normally carried out during one’s sleep, such as memory regulation and resting of the mind.

The details are…… I suppose there's no point in explaining.
Even if I were to bring one of the top neuroscientists from your former world, they wouldn't be able to comprehend it even with one or two months."

"Is there no danger of Growth Sleep occurring and falling asleep in combat?"

"It is difficult for Growth Sleep to call upon someone in battle, so there will never be a time when you will fall asleep when fighting."

"Apart from me, are there any reincarnates on the side of the gods of virtue?"

"There are none. The only one who can reincarnate souls from different worlds, is I alone. In addition, it consumes a great amount of power so I seldom do it. Based on the trend in this battle against the evil god, but you can assume that I won't be able to do it in the next 10 years.
But there should be humans who have received the divine blessing of other gods, so it's alright to try talking to them if you find any."

I was about to ask how I am supposed to find them, but it was clear with a little bit of thinking.
I can just use [Appraisal] and search for those who possess《Goddess of Virtue's Blessing》in their status.

"Then, is it okay to expect the humans who have received blessings from the other gods to be amicable?"

"Fundamentally, it should be so. However, they are humans who the gods are pleased with, so it might be better to think of them as idiosyncratic."

That seems fun.

"Are there any tricks raising my skills?"

"I believe you already know, but skill levels rise faster when using them in combat compared to using them normally.
Immediately after meeting the conditions for a Gift or raising a skill level, the sensation one feels when using the skill changes so be careful.
As for raising one's skills normally, doing nothing but repeating the same action over and over, just like you did, is actually an effective method.
However, sometimes changing your perspective and exploring a different training method can be effective as well. There have also been times when skills rose after making new discoveries for certain things.
Well, it's fine to consider it no different to the techniques you were accustomed to in your previous world."

As I was asking those questions, my body had steadily been turning transparent.

"……It is almost time.

This time it was because you were thrust into Growth Sleep after the incident with Goleth, but this kind of thing can't be done normally.
If you ever wish to contact me, visit my shrine and acquire the [Prayer] skill.

The goddess said something inexcusable, like shrines are a treasure house of skills.

As I become increasingly transparent, my body is drawn by the planet's gravity and I fall down to Marquekt.

——I said thank you, but I don't know whether it was heard.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

Have you ever felt like you are falling while in a light sleep and then wake up with a sudden jerk?

That's it.

"Fugya."

While producing such a strange sound, I woke up on top of a bed.

I was in Alfred-tousan's residence in the fortress, where we had slept yesterday.

The sky, which could be seen from a small window fitted with an iron lattice, had already fallen to dusk.

"So iss been fibe hours siss den." (So, it's been five hours since then)

Having awoken from the Growth Sleep, I turn around after feeling signs of squirming, and there, Julia-kaasan was sleeping happily.

[Appraisal].

《Julia Chrebl (Wife of Viscount Chrebl |《Flame Prison Witch》)

20 years old

Level 47/51
HP 89/89
MP 270/270

State: Growth Sleep

Skills
• Master class
[Fire Element Magic] 6

[Mana Control] 4

• General
[Fire Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Water Magic] 3
[Wind Magic] 3
[Earth Magic] 2
[Light Magic] 3
[Telekinesis Magic] 3
[Mana Manipulation] 5
[Mana Perception] 6
[Simultaneous Invocation] 4

《Spirit of Fire's Blessing》(Is able to acquire the blessing of fire spirits. Compensation for the effect | range of fire attributed spells, increased speed for the learning | growth for fire magic skills.) 》

She's gotten stronger again somehow!
And there was a《Spirit of Fire's Blessing》or something attached without me realising.

Anyway, I calculate Julia-kaasan's Growth Sleep to be (51-47) x 3 hours, a total of 12 hours. Assuming that she fell asleep at the same time as me, there's another 7 hours remaining.

I got up and descended from the bed, onto the floor. The room was dim, due to the window being small
……Hm?

Wasn't there something strange just now?

When I looked down at my own body, I was lost for words. For some reason,
"I.. I gwew!" (I.. I grew!)

---

14. Side Effect (Firebird)

In a daze, I looked down on my body that has grown bigger.

Even if I say that, it doesn't mean that it turned back to how it was in my previous life.

I didn't have any children so I don't exactly know, but this size should be around a 3 years old's.
The height is around 90 cm.
The reason is that my head doesn't quite reach the table that is standing beside the bed.
I probably got taller by nearly 30 cm and since I was alright after I just got down from the bed without thinking, my skeletal structure and muscles should also be sturdy.
If I compare this to how my body before I've grown got sore just from sitting in place for a longer time, this was a remarkable progress.

That being said, rather than being happy about how my body grew, I'm just baffled now.

First I touched my body all over for a while, then climbed up the nearby chair and grabbed a glass and filled it with water from a water jug from the same table.
The water jug was heavy so I used not just my two hands, but my whole body's muscles, but still, these actions were impossible before.

I took the glass that I poured water in with both hands, then drank the water with accompanying '*glug glug*' sounds.

"….fhuu"

I wiped down the water that spilled from the sides of my mouth while I let out a sigh filled with a sense of accomplishment.

Then the door suddenly opened.

"——aah, sorry I'm late. Oh, is Julia still in her Growth Sleep? Mine has already ended—— hey, where is Ed?"

It looks like the one who entered was a talking Alfred-tousan.
Apparently, dad didn't notice that I left the bed and sitting on a chair.

Dad knows that Julia-kaasan is currently in Growth Sleep state, huh.
Then, it should be alright to assume that the concept of Growth Sleep is commonly known in this world.

Judging by his words, it seems dad also went into Growth Sleep after the battle.
[Appraise]

《
Alfred Chrebl (Viscount | Santamana Kingdom, Third Area Army Commander |《Castle Destroyer》,《Renowned Commander》)

39 years old
Half-elf

Level 40
HP 94/94
MP 81/81

Skills
•Master class
[Leadership] 6
[Spearmanship] 5

•General
[Command] 9 (MAX)
[Sword Skills] 5
[Bow Skills] 3
[Spear Skills] 9 (MAX)
[Unarmed Combat Skills] 3
[Dagger Skills] 1
[Horse Riding Skills] 6
[Water Magic] 3
[Wind Magic] 4
[Earth Magic] 4

《God of War's Attention》(Has gained the attention of the God of War Marslat due to notable military achievements. Small supplement to the acquisition, learning speed, and effectiveness of skills related to battle. Becomes harder to be hit by stray arrows. Can more easily sense the intent to rebel in subordinates.)
》

The rise in level is 1 and the HP and MP values have grown accordingly.

The nickname of《Renowned Commander》has also been added, so it feels like his prestige as a soldier has also increased greatly.

But, that's not the part that needs attention.

The [Command] skills has reached the counter stop and [Leadership] has also went up by 2.
The Goddess said that skills are more easily raised when used in real battle situations, but truly, they went up splendidly.
At this rate, a few more battles like this and [Leadership] will also reach the counter stop.
Well, if battles like this would occur frequently, then it would probably be very bad for the country, but maybe it's not that ridiculous.

And finally,《God of War's Attention》
It's seemingly different from a God's Blessing, but for someone that stands on a battlefield, it includes many effects that a person would be simply thankful for.

With this, it's a bit of a relief if there is a war, but from the family's point of view, of course it's much better if there aren't even any chances for dad to stand on a battlefield.
I'm probably overthinking it, but I hope dad doesn't get dragged into more wars simply because he gained the attention of the God of War.

The rise in level was 1, so dad's Growth Sleep was most likely 3 hours.

After I entered Growth Sleep he finished with the remnant hunting and got some shut-eye after leaving the cleanup matters to the mustached knight, or probably something like that.
He probably wanted to stay awake until the cleanup has been completed, but apparently the Growth Sleep comes immediately after the tension of battle has dissipated.

…..well, that aside, it would be bad to ignore dad any longer.

"——dad"

"Uwa! Ed, you were there!"
Dad looked back towards me——

"H-hey, Ed… , aren't you a bit bigger? Or rather, you just called out to me saying 'dad', right?"

Dad tilted his head so far it almost fell off and asked me.

"Reber appu."

After growing, my mouth is functioning a bit better, but the sensation of my before-growth body still remains somewhat, so it's kinda hard to talk.

By the way, I keep [Instant Interpretation] turned on.
I've become able to understand about half without it, but the talking part is not yet passable.

"Level up….? I see, your body got bigger due to a side effect of leveling up. You have certainly defeated many enemies with Goleth on top of the list."

"Ophen happen?"

"Hn? Asking if it happens often? For one, they say if sudden level ups occur in a short amount of time it's possible to grow in height and develop more muscles. They also say that the effect is especially extensive in case of small children."

But the Growth Sleep was too short if that's the case?, said dad with a doubtful expression.

gulp

"…well, for a not even 1-year-old baby to defeat enemies is not something that normally occurs. No wonder if something strange happens."

For the time being I pour some water into the glass on top of the table and hand it over to

dad.

"Ooh, you are thoughtful. Thank you…… rather, much too thoughtful!"

After that retort, dad drank up the water at once, with a "Puhaa!".
Contrary to his elegant appearance it was a middle-aged-man-like way of drinking. Well, at 39 he is middle aged.

Dad put the glass down on the table and said with a serious expression while pouring himself a second glass of water.
"——Really sorry, Ed."

"Yesh?"

I didn't know what he was talking about, so I sincerely tilted my head.

"About Goleth. I know that you were the one that took him down, but at time I made it out to be Julia's achievement. Since I didn't think anyone would suddenly believe that a half-year-old baby took out the enemy leader."

Well, that's for sure.
Rather, the declaration of '——My wife took down the Head of the enemy!' from that time had this kind of meaning behind it.
That was some quick thinking in that situation.

"Also, if people realize that you are not a usual baby, then many bothersome things could happen because of it. I was thinking that as a father, I can't let you be burdened by things like that."

That's perfectly reasonable.
In truth, even I find it troublesome as someone that was 30 years old in the previous world.
I'm a person that was almost isolated in the workplace because I refused to go socialize after work and instead went to play fighting games.

"…thank you"

Words of gratitude easily left my mouth.

"No, thank You, really. This battle would have been very dangerous if you and Julia weren't here. We may have lost."

Indeed, rather than the numbers disadvantage, the enemy had a monster named Goleth.
If he wanted, he would've been more than able to blow through the gate of the fortress with a throwing spear heavily enchanted by [Enchant Magic].

"If you didn't make me understand that time, perhaps I would have lost Julia too. I didn't realize at all that Julia was so distressed."

It's probably about how Julia-kaasan said before the battle, that she would've left the house with me if things didn't change.
I was also surprised about that one.

"Since Ed made me realize Julia's feelings I brought you two to the fortress with me and as a result we managed to repel the <Black Wolf Fang>. It's all thanks to Ed."

Dad said while looking straight into my eyes.
It's kind of embarrassing.
I reply while shaking my head.

"Ai didh nashing"

"Ai? Aah, you said I. I see, you prefer I(ore-俺)."

Come to think of it dad uses I(boku-僕) to refer to himself.

"——In the future you are sure to become an amazing fellow. My sons—— Ed's older brothers are also exceptional, but from you I feel something of an entirely different level. Dreadfully so."

Dad hugs me tightly.

"But, you are still our small child. Please don't do anything too dangerous."

He probably refers to the battle with Goleth.

I thought that time, that the battle is going nowhere, so I purposefully didn't block Goleth's attack on the fortress wall and lured him in to let his guard down and keep attacking the wall.
After confirming that Goleth used up all his throwing spear that were enchanted using [Enchant Magic], I threw back the first throwing spear at Goleth.
And with the maximum momentum, using [Physical Magic].

Goleth took that spear attack head on, since he didn't have any spears at hand and couldn't counter-attack.
No, I think part of the reason was that he believed he took me down along with the fortress walls.
Therefore, even if he had a spear at hand, Goleth may have been unable to react in time anyway.

I was just taking that risk because I felt that it was the right thing to do, but watching something like that happen right in front of them, it couldn't have been easy for a parent.

"Aihm sowwy"

"It's all right. I believe I know what your aim was. Your magic power, courage, and decisiveness are all inappropriate for your age. I was surprised. By surprised I mean—— It's

damn impossible!”

Mr. Dad is prone to make retorts, apparently.
Well, Julia-kaasan is the silly type, so it’s not strange to develop that trait.

“——dha mersheneries?”

After defeating Goleth I went into Growth Sleep right away, so I don’t know what happened after that.

“Aah, about 70 percent of the members of <Black Wolf Fang> have been wiped out or captured. As for the remaining 30 percent, the plan is to interrogate the captured ones and make a list of names that will be added to the list of wanted criminals in the whole country. Pursuing those that run towards Sonorato is too difficult, but just in case we will notify the other fortresses and request that we put up a cordon.”

Apparently, since they were not an official army, but an army of bandits, they are not considered prisoners of war, but arrested prisoners.

“Whai didh dey come here?”

“Aah, you want to ask why did they appear here and not at the Zakholtz Fortress we originally thought, right? Or rather, you understood what we talked about even before today, huh.”

Dad was already tired of making those retorts and just sighed.

“Apparently, the information of them heading towards Zakholtz Fortress itself was their work. The commander of Zakholtz Fortress is a 15 years old boy, that inherited the position of the family head only a few days ago, you see. His Majesty asked me to support him if anything happens, but that backfired on us this time.”

I see, there were such circumstances.

“Whai were dey det shtrong? Dey were jhust a mershenery ghoup, bhut dey spred infohmation and had chatapuht.”

“You noticed an excellent point. Or rather, you noticed it too well! ….well, I should stop with this already, right?”

Fhuu, dad sighed, and

“Due to the internal conflicts dragging on, both the national army and the feudal lords’ personal armies in Sonorato were mostly annihilated, you see. By taking in the remnants of the defeated regular armies, the mercenary groups that were fighting in Sonorato could increase both the domestic and foreign ability of their intelligence units, it seems. However, I didn’t think they would be able to manipulate information inside Santamana as well. That catapult siege weapon was probably also seized during their internal battles.”

“What wash deir aim?”

“Indeed, you don’t assault a fortress if you just want to pillage. If they went as far as manipulating intelligence to reduce the number of forces within the fortress, their aim may very well have been taking over the fortress for themselves, just as Nebulos said. ….ah, Nebulos is my secretary.”

“…ushing dhis fortressh ash a beashead and invade Santamana?”

I still can’t articulate well enough, but what I wanted to say was ‘Using this fortress as a beachhead and invade Santamana?’.

Both of dad’s eyes were opened wide because of my words.

“Most likely, just as Ed said. This fortress was designed for solid defense, so it’s a perfect place to have the first base. Increase their forces from the nearby villages and towns, conquer a few fortresses and towns and declare their independence from Santamana. It’s possible they were thinking along those lines.”

“can go well?”

“That, I can’t say…. The <Black Wolf Fang> is mighty, but Santamana has the powerful Imperial Guards. However, apparently with the ceasefire agreement in Sonorato, there are quite a lot of mercenaries that are now unemployed and if Goleth was able to take the fortress and send out a notice, he could have organized a force of over ten-thousand. There are also rumors that <Yatagarasu>, an infamous assassin group with connections to <Black Wolf Fang>, wants to move their headquarters to Santamana, since they can no longer work within Sonorato.”

“Ranzrakk forshes not too few?”

“Yeah, too few. I requested additional reinforcements from His Majesty the King not too long ago, and it was finally the time that it was put together. The troops under my command are divided into two between the town and the fortress with soldiers alternating in between, but even then, this situation, in which they are constantly under pressure, is continuing. There was also this matter this time, so I want to let them rest or it will affect the morale.”

Dad stood up after drinking all the water from the glass.

“——well then, I have to go now. It’s been 6 hours since Julia went into Growth Sleep, so probably she has one more level’s worth to go. In that case, she will probably wake up in the middle of the night. Oh dear, the level difference between us will widen once again.”

To be exact, Julia-kaasan’s level went up by 4, so she still has 2 level’s worth of Growth Sleep remaining, but dad has no way of knowing.
Or rather, he is bothered by the level difference, huh.

“When the cleanup of this battle is finished I will probably need to go to the capital. I have

to report this matter to His Majesty and request reinforcements for the fortresses near the border. Ah, that's right, when I'm going to the capital I will also take you two."

"Me thoo?"

"I want to confirm your status with a high-level cleric once. Julia's level also went up, so she also probably wants to confirm her own status, so it's the perfect opportunity. That being said, it's still some time away. You two will first return home, then after things calm down around here I will follow after you. Since it's on the way to the capital it doesn't become a time loss either."

Dad only said this and then left the room after kissing the sleeping mom on her cheek.

| TOC |

15. Straight to the Study

"Ha~ we've finally arrived!"
Seeing our dearly missed home, Julia-kaasan raises her voice.

——It has been 10 days since the battle at the fortress.
Julia-kaasan and I have safely returned home.

The later events.
When Julia-kaasan woke up in the dead of night and realised that it was night time, she held me tightly and fell asleep just like that.
I couldn't do anything about it, so I used [Physics Magic] to raise and lower the water jug whilst on the bed, expending my MP and carrying out the expansion of my maximum MP as I wait for morning.
Mum had indeed looked lonely, but her face instantly glowed with happiness when Dad said, "Let's go to the royal capital together next time."
Having assembled to see us off, the fortress knights watched over the two with accomplished expressions.

We weren't able to make many stopovers on our way back either.
That was because the survivors of <Black Wolf Fang>, the mercenary group that assaulted Ranzrack Fortress, had dispersed from the fortress in all directions, and we were liable to encounter them on our return trip.
Well, perhaps there weren't any mercenaries who were brave enough to pick a fight with the《Flame Prison Witch》who herded them together and turned them into ash, but the dangers of passing through while avoiding them were no more than simply avoiding them and passing through.

Thus, we returned the way we came, via the carriage, and Mum and I arrived at the estate after 10 days.

Now, this is the first opportunity I have had to thoroughly examine this estate from the outside.

In this settlement that is the size of a village to someone with the standards of a modern Japanese person, there is a smallish hill, on top of which stands a two-storey residence.
It's a cosy residence with approximately 10 rooms on both the first and second floors combined.
Of course, it is considered cosy for the mansion of a feudal lord, but in the standards of my previous world, it's closer to a palace.

According to Mum's explanation, Dad—— Viscount Alfred Chrebl's territory encompasses this whole region, including this village and the three other villages in the vicinity, as well as a small town slightly further away, or so I'm told.

Their names are Corbette (コーベット) Village, Riverette (リベレット) Village, Trenadette (トレナ

デット) Village, Kuuret (クーレット) Village, and Fauno (フォノ) City respectively.

Incidentally, the reason the feudal lord's mansion is not established in Fauno City is apparently because Fauno City is located on the outskirts of Dad's territory. He leaves the management to the merchants, and is offered a portion of the market profits as tax.

Aside from Fauno City, the other four villages are typical farming villages, so it seems like there are no particular differences between them.
If anything, a forest protrudes from behind the four villages, and there are stories about faeries possibly living inside them.

Although it's not to the point of being called remote countryside, it's a tranquil and subdued region overall, with a local history of being passed down through the many generations of Dad's family.

"Welcome home!"

When we enter the estate, the servants greet us en masse.

As the servants inform Mum about the various events that transpired while we were away, I was lifted up from behind by somebody.

"Welcome home, Young Master Ed."

It was my big-breasted, loli-faced personal maid, Stephanie, or Steph.

"We're home~"

"Oh my, you're already able to speak? Or rather, Young Master, haven't you grown somewhat bigger……?"

The servants talking to Mum also look at me in surprise.

"It's because Edgar-kun is clever."

Julia-kaasan comments, but……did she really intend to carry through with that conviction?

The servants clearly seemed to have questions, but none of the servants had the courage to deliberately question the smiling Madame Julia.

"Study~"

I said, aware of my charm.

"Uh huh, because I promised, right~ Stephanie-chan, please take Edgar-kun to Al-kun's study. If he requests something, you may comply, as long as it isn't dangerous."

"Y-yes, as you wish."

Leaving Julia-kaasan, who seemed to still have arrangements to make with the servants, Steph led me by the hand towards the study.
At any rate, Steph's hand is soft.
I unintentionally feel it with both hands.
Yeah, it's not sexual harassment because I'm a baby.

"Y-young Master Ed……. we have reached the Study?"

"Ba-babu."

I return to using baby talk to deceive her as a reflex.

Now, at last.
I walk inside the study after Steph opened the door.

The study gave the impression that it was, without a doubt, a study.
Right in the middle was a wooden desk with a profound presence.
Beside it were tall bookshelves that reached the ceiling, and behind the desk was a curtain-covered window.
Steph followed me inside the study and opened the curtains and window, letting the room ventilate.

I promptly check the spines of the books lined up on the bookshelves.
It took some time because I'm still not familiar with the characters, but I didn't tire, nor lose interest, thanks to [No Fatigue].
I look back at Steph, who was stifling a yawn in a corner of the room, and thoroughly survey the bookshelves in the study.

If I were to briefly categorise the books in the study, it would be something like this:

1. Complete literature works. There are many from Santamana, but there are also some from Sonora-to and other nations.
2. History books. These too, provide for each nation.
3. How-to books, such as agricultural guides and self-help books on governing one's territory.
4. Encyclopaedias.
5. Magic Tomes.
6. Dictionaries.
7. Martial Arts Manuals.

I'm worried about where to start from.
After feeling troubled for almost an hour, I decide to prioritise them in this order:

Magic tomes > Dictionaries > Martial arts manuals > History books > Encyclopaedias > Complete literature works > How-to books

Prioritising the magic tomes was a matter of preference, but it was also due to reflecting on the fight with Goleth.

That is,

——I didn't have an effective method of dealing damage to Goleth.

Indeed, I defeated Goleth by throwing his spears back, but conversely, it could also be said that I would have no deciding attack method if I didn't have Goleth's spears.
I hadn't been able to deal much damage by throwing rocks at Goleth using [Physics Magic].
[Physics Magic] is more of a supporting magic than offensive magic, and using it for dealing damage to an enemy is not a very efficient method anyway.
Since I have the MP to use [Physics Magic] just to levitate and throw rocks, directly producing flames like Julia-kaasan did would definitely be more efficient.

Thus, I'm also going to be taught magic from Julia-kaasan.
Actually, I also received a short induction on the way home.
But each person normally has a specific aptitude for magic, and Mum had no confidence in her ability to teach me well in anything but her specialty, fire magic.
I should compensate for it, with what I can supplement from the magic tomes.

I still have sections of the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』to interpret.
For the time being, I continue the rather bothersome (or should be, but I can do it easily thanks to [No Fatigue]) work of creating analogies with my own interpretations and memorising them.

But time will still be spent on memorisation, even if I don't tire.
Because it's not like I'm particularly intelligent or anything.
So thinking of utilising my time efficiently, I am now searching for magic tomes that explain the main points more clearly.

And although I understand the general meaning of the sections I have memorised, they're my own interpretations after all.
There are many sections in which I haven't grasped the detailed nuances, and I don't have much faith in my own knowledge being accurate.

And that's where the dictionaries come into play.
Using dictionaries to comprehend the magic tomes is a given.
However, [No Fatigue] is wasted on just that.
Let's diligently memorise all the articles that stand out.

And after I'm able to comprehend the magic tomes and dictionaries, I'll proceed with the martial arts manuals, history books, and encyclopaedias, in that order. And if I have time, I'll deepen my education about this world with the complete literature works.

The martial arts manuals are obviously due to me reflecting on the fight with Goleth.
The battle with Goleth was ranged, so even I, a baby, could fight. But how would it have gone if the fight was in close quarters instead?
The Evil God's apostles won't go easy just because their opponent is an infant.
They might be hard to execute with such a small body, but I should at least have an idea of

what kind of martial art techniques exist in this world.

Postponing the how-to books were because they don't seem to be necessary at the moment.
I'm the fourth son, so I'm unlikely to inherit the territory in the future.
Of course, it would be a different story if Viscount Chrebl's territory were to suffer from famine and be troubled.
I'd probably utilise the knowledge from my previous world and try do something about it.
However, the management of Pops' territory currently seems to be going well.
That being the case, there's no need to attempt to use a strong domestic affairs cheat.

There is, perhaps, another month until Alfred-tousan finishes dealing with the aftermath of the Ranzrack Fortress incident and returns home.
Meanwhile, I have Julia-kaasan teaching me magic when she is unoccupied, and during the other times, I either read in here or practice magic in the courtyard.
I also have some verifications to make in regards to skills, and will do that when I have time.
During the evening, I exhaust my MP in bed and expand my maximum MP.

Also, I can't forget about speaking practice.
Due to the growth that accompanied my levelling up, my tongue and vocal cords have developed, and I'm making preparations to produce words.
However, my actual age is only 6 months old after all, and my speaking practice doesn't even last for 10 minutes.
From now on, I will pay attention to my pronunciation even when reading books aloud, and I hope I will be able to speak properly soon.

Well, that's how it is.

I'm repeating monotonous work that would normally be tedious, but it's practically a reward for the current me.

——Now then, it's time for the fun, fun time to raise skills……!

16. Verification Start

And thus, I am once again raising my skills.

Before that, let's check my current status.
There.

《Edgar Chrebl

Level 31
HP 63/63
MP 1442/1442

Skills
• Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

• Legendary class
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –

• Master class
[Physics Magic] 6
[Enchant Magic] 2
[Mana Control] 5
[Letterless Invocation] 5

• General
[Throwing Spear Techniques] 1
[Fire Magic] 2
[Water Magic] 2
[Wind Magic] 4
[Earth Magic] 2
[Light Magic] 2
[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Telekinesis Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Simultaneous Invocation] 9 (MAX)

《Goddess of Virtue's Blessing +1》》

I managed to increase my maximum MP by 690, in the ten days it took to travel from Ranzrack Fortress to the estate.

Due to levitating myself in my free time, [Physics Magic] rose by one level, and [Mana Control] also went up by one.

For [Enchant Magic], I repeated the action of casting [Enchant Magic] on the spare wand I borrowed from Mum, but the ascension came to a halt after an increase of one.
[Enchant Magic] is apparently, in accordance with the name, 《Magic to temporarily add magic to weapons or armour》(according to the help information provided by [Appraisal]), but naturally, the magic that can be added is limited to the magic I have already learned.
[Enchant Magic]'s skill level growth speed seems slow compared to [Physics Magic], but I suppose the cause is because the added magic level is low.
Thus, I'll postpone [Enchant Magic] for the moment and raise the level of the general skills involving magic.

Each of those general magic skills rose in levels a little because I received a lecture on magic from Julia-kaasan.
Incidentally, only [Wind Magic] rose to 4 because I secretly invoked it during our travel and earned skill levels.

And so, back to the present.
Firstly, the expanding of my maximum MP is a given.
And, due to the events at Ranzrack Fortress, I also received permission from Dad and could openly be taught magic by Julia-kaasan.

Julia-kaasan's teaching method was simple.
I position both hands opposite one another, as if I were holding a basketball, and then produce a small flame in that space using magic.
I maintain my focus so that the flame won't be extinguished.
Of course, I need to continuously keep the ᚦ magic symbol in my mind in that time, and I also had to maintain the ᚦ written in the air in the beginning .

It seemed simple, but it was actually quite profound; there was a remarkable difference in both the stability and maintained duration of the flame produced by a novice using [Fire Magic], compared to a flame cast by an expert.

In reality, you can see a subtle yet distinct variation when you compare the flame produced by me and the flame produced by Julia-kaasan.
It seems Mum can maintain this flame for around 1 mark (in this world, 1 mark is approximately 1 hour in the previous world) if she feels like it.

Such a thing is absolutely impossible for the present me. My mana disperses if I concentrate on the flame, and the symbol disappears if I concentrate on my mana; I am unable to split my focus between these three components well.
Of course, I know it would be easy if I used the [Letterless Invocation] skill, but then it wouldn't be practicing.

That's right, it's like trying to balance an apple on your head while doing a handstand……
You should be able to understand if I say it like that.
In the past, I saw a performance in a circus or acrobatics troupe or something, where someone walked on their hands with an apple on their head.
I had thought they were doing something skillful; it might be similar to that.

How should I say it, I always felt frustrated and would have immediately given up if this were my previous life.

"……Hmm? Huh? Edgar-kun, how unexpected, do you not have the talent?"

Julia-kaasan suddenly lets slip from her mouth.

Ugh. My face wasn't tear-stained or anything, okay!

However, even though I might not have the talent for magic, I have the skill bestowed by the goddess.

[No Fatigue].

I suppose there's no need for an explanation anymore, but thanks to it, I'm able to exhibit superhuman powers of concentration for this mentally-straining work.

1 hour. 2 hours.
I produce a flame between my hands, and continue trying to maintain it.
Mum, who gave all sorts of advice and watched over me in the beginning, was unable to keep me company to the end and relied on Steph afterwards, returning to the estate.

After that, an additional 1 hour, 2 hours.
Steph, who was waiting by my side, seemed to gradually fall into a daze, but I felt like I grasped something after a short while and so I devoted myself to the flame in my hands.

And then, when I became able to maintain the flame for around 5 minutes somehow,

"——Edgar-kun? You couldn't be, still doing it?"

In the courtyard that had become dark without me knowing, Julia-kaasan turns up, surprised.
……By the way, Steph was sleeping, leaning on the pile of firewood in the yard.

I presented today's accomplishments to Mum.

"Wow, amazing. You've improved."

According to Mum, it normally takes several months to reach this point.

Indeed, if I didn't have [No Fatigue] then I probably wouldn't be able to continue practicing this much.
No, my MP would have run out much earlier.

Incidentally, Mum had been able to come this far with 3 days of training, and had apparently been sought after as a rare child prodigy.

"Edgar-kun is unusual, aren't you? How should I say it, you were able to grasp the feeling for it quickly, even though you don't have a great sense for it?"

Julia-kaasan is a natural airhead as well as a prodigy, so she digs into people's hearts simple-mindedly like this.

Before we departed the fortress, Dad said that the students who were taught to use magic by Julia-kaasan generally quit within a month.
At that time, I wondered why it would turn out that way when they're being taught by such a kind person, but now I clearly understand from the bottom of my heart.
My lack of sense was compensated for by the duration of which I could concentrate so it was fine, but normally one's heart would break.

Furthermore,

"Hmm, I thought that Edgar-kun took after Mummy, but maybe I was wrong?"
"Huh? I understood it instantly though……?"

and so on, these sharp, simple-minded words would rain down incessantly when she saw a chance.

Even the fundamental magic explanations,

"Mn~ it's like you *hrrng* and *poof*."
"No, no. Now then, *hrrng* and *poof*. Concentrate and hold it, then release it with a *poof*."

Like this, she didn't get to the point at all.

——Damn prodigies.

I curse at Julia-kaasan, who had started after her senses had developed.

The monotony of the work was handled by [No Fatigue], but even [No Fatigue] was powerless against Mum's mental attack.

However, I won't lose.
I'm a former fighting gamer.
If I worried about such instigation every time, I won't be become skilful no matter how much time passes.

I frantically calm my heart as I strive with my crash course in [Fire Magic].

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

And then, as I improve my fire magic, I attempt to verify the thing that's been on my mind since the Goleth battle.

It's about the [Throwing Spear Techniques].

In the battle against Goleth, I fought by using [Physics Magic] to catch and return Goleth's spears, and obtained the general skill [Throwing Spear Techniques] because of it.

However, this is a strange verdict.

Because, I haven't even touched a spear directly.
Moreover, I have yet to even hold a genuine spear even now.

If that is considered "spear throwing", then it's been approximated to extent of the word "throwing".

That is how it is.

—hasn't the remaining "spear" part also been approximated in itself?

After I woke up from Growth Sleep, I've been wanting to verify it for the longest time.

So, about how to verify it specifically, what I need to do is simple.

1. Collect various spears and poles from within the house.
2. Use [Physics Magic] on each of them to 'spear throw' them.
3. Repeat 2, if the [Throwing Spear Skills] skill rises, that spear(?) is a spear.

If 5 hours pass without [Throwing Spear Skills] skill rising, that spear(?) is not a spear.

The 5 hours is what I have calculated from my experience with raising skills so far, it's the time needed to raise the level of a skill from 1 to 2. I believe it's around 4 hours to be exact, but I'll give it an hour's leeway making it 5 hours.

The things I've requested Steph to assemble for the sake of (1) are very wide-ranging.

First are spears.
A long spear and short spear, a throwing spear, a spear for melee combat, and a spear used on horseback and such, the spears lying on the premises and those with a known pretext were all gathered together.
Alfred-tousan is a spear user, so the Viscount Chrebl residence has a superb number of spears, which is helpful.

Next are weapons, with the exception of spears.
A sword, halberd, axe, knife, and an arrow.
I brought an axe, thinking I could use it as comparison if the halberd was counted as a spear.
I also thought it was possible for arrows to be considered miniscule throwing spears in form, so I prepared one just in case.

Finally, objects that aren't weapons.
An ordinary rod, a clothes pole, a broom, a piece of firewood, a thick needle, and a wooden stick.
I assembled objects of all sizes, with the requirement being that they resembled spears in shape.
I think it's very improbable, but I think it's better to check from the outset, just to confirm.

Now then, after the spear(?) preparations have been arranged, I open the notebook which I had Steph bring, and finally start the experiment.

——Let me see, what kind of results will we get?

---

17. Verification Results

——A practitioner's specialty attribute seems to be related to their personality.

That was the description in the article on specialty attributes inside the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』.

I might not understand what it's trying to say all of a sudden, but it's like this.

——There's a proper reason for Julia-kaasan's specialty attribute being fire.

At first glance, Julia-kaasan is gentle and would seem to be good at water or wind or light, but when it comes to battle, her terrifying fighting spirit can be seen, and she's also rather earnest when it comes to magic lectures.
She earnestly——digs into her students' hearts.

"Geez~ Like I said, the ト for casting《Flame Bit》is different from the simple ト invocation. It's like hitting with a *whoosh*."
"ル (conset) has no meaning alone, so the next ト is like this, used with a sinking feeling. Like I said, not like that……"
"Look, it failed because you used the ト for《Flame Bit》instead of《Flame Lance》. Concentrate better, and do it with a whoa-like feeling!"

What I'm learning from Mum now is how to cast the《Flame bit》spell that is invoked with a single ト symbol, and the two-symbol ルト-invoked《Flame Lance》.
Just like Mum said, there are subtle differences between the respective ト uses.
It's still the elementary to intermediate level magic, so if it's just using《Flame Bit》and《Flame Lance》alone, I can cast them somehow.

However, to cast these《Flame Bit》and《Flame Lance》spells alternatively, or to cast either one at random, is surprisingly difficult.

In fighting game terms, it would be like being attacked with an endless spam of mid and low attacks.
In a fighting game, it's possible to react to the attacks after seeing them because the action is delayed, but instantly switching between the ト for《Flame bit》and the ト for《Flame Lance》is mostly a contest of instincts.

Thanks to [No Fatigue], it's no problem to continue such mentally-taxing work in itself, but the issue is Mum's coaching.
It's hard to turn it aside just because there's no ill will, and it shaves down my emotional fortitude quite a bit.
Recently, the system I've been using is to have her simply teach me the training method and then practicing it on my own, becoming a figure who flees from Julia-kaasan in the middle of the tutelage.

Well, she's been teaching me very enthusiastically, and has been accompanying me as much

as possible, so I am grateful.

There's still some way to go before《Fire Storm》, but I can instantly stabilise and use《Flame Lance》at least.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

Now then, the results of my verification of [Throwing Spear Techniques].

The experiment to raise the level of [Throwing Spear Techniques] will be rather time-consuming, so I started with the objects that didn't seem as though they would be counted as spears and used [Physics Magic] to throw them at the target for 5 hours apiece, and repeated this act.

Let me list out the assembled objects one more time.

Group 1 (Spear): long spear, short spear, throwing spear, spear for melee combat, spear used from horseback
Group 2 (Weapons): sword, halberd, axe, knife, arrow
Group 3 (Long and Narrow objects): ordinary rod, clothes pole, broom, piece of firewood, thick needle, wooden stick

First of all, I tested the Group 3 (long and narrow) objects, which didn't seem as if they would count.

Ordinary pole → ×
Clotheshorse → ×
Broom → ×
Firewood → ×

My [Throwing Spear Techniques] skill's level didn't rise despite throwing these endlessly.
The leveling rate for my high levelled [Physics Magic] skill also slowed down, and the skill level remained unchanged.
The results I obtained results were in line with my expectations, but the 20 hours I spent for them may have been a waste.

Next are the unexpected results.

Thick needle → General Skill [Shuriken Techniques] acquired.

Somehow, I acquired a different skill to [Throwing Spear Techniques] approximately 1 hour after I started.

Since I went to the trouble, I continued to throw the needle for the remaining 4 hours using that skill to see what would happen, and my [Shuriken Techniques] rose to level 2.
It seems like a useful skill as it has better maneuverability than [Throwing Spear Techniques], so just gaining this skill makes the Group 3 results worthwhile.

And for the final item, the wooden stick, the outcome was that my [Shuriken Techniques] skill became 3 somehow.

Whether it was the needle or the stick, it was strange that they would be referred to as shuriken, but it's likely that throwing small, pointed objects would be counted as part of [Shuriken Techniques].
I also considered the possibility of them being counted for both [Shuriken Techniques] and [Throwing Spear Techniques], but in the end, the level of [Throwing Spear Techniques] didn't change while throwing the Group 3 items, so they may have rather strict boundaries.

I spent a total of 30 hours so far, with the work divided into 6 days, but I obtained the unexpected byproduct that was [Shuriken Techniques] so I can say the results were satisfactory.

I renewed my spirits and begun with Group 2 (weapons).

First is the sword.

When I tried throwing it, it often rotated as it flew because its centre of gravity wasn't stable, but thanks to that, I acquired the General Skill [Flying Sword Techniques].
I didn't know much about it, so I looked at the help information of [Appraisal].

《Flying Sword Skill: A sword technique that utilises swords made to float in the air.》

Yeah. Just as it says.
Nevertheless, just what kind of people are supposed to use this skill?
The idea of manipulating a sword with [Physics Magic] to fight should normally be very improbable because the MP efficiency is horrible.

But, well, since I managed to obtain it, I tried to use [Flying Sword Techniques] to perform the sword techniques mentioned in the martial arts manuals.
I somehow grasped the feeling for this when I was doing it, but to put it simply, I was able to let the sword rotate and make consecutive thrusts more freely because there was no one actually holding the sword.

Thinking along those lines, this may hold the potential to do some unexpectedly interesting things, like possibly creating a new system of techniques based on principles that differ from the conventional sword techniques.
Using this pretext, one could integrate [Sword Techniques] with other skills.

Furthermore, my body still corresponds to that of a 3-year-old child, so I can't brandish a sword on my own.
However, there's no problem if I use [Flying Sword Techniques].
I'll research it next time if I can find some free time.

The halberd didn't raise the [Throwing Spear Techniques] either, nor did I obtain an independent skill from it.

If the halberd wasn't treated as a spear then there was no point in doing the axe, but since it's there, I test it to see whether or not I could acquire a skill.
As a result, I obtained the [Throwing Axe Techniques] skill.
As expected.

Next, knife gave me similar results, and I obtained [Knife Throwing].
That in itself was almost all as I had expected, but the question of what differed from [Shuriken Techniques] emerged.
Seems like I won't be able to finish if I investigate it now, so I'll do it when I have another opportunity.

The final item in Group 2 was the arrow, but it didn't raise [Throwing Spear Techniques], nor give me a skill.
I hoped that I might acquire [Archery Techniques] by chance, but I'll probably need to properly draw a bow and fire an arrow after all.

The remaining Group 1 items were simple. The long spear that I tried first increased the [Throwing Spear Techniques] skill to 2, and after that, throwing each of the other varieties of spears allowed me to attain a total skill level of 5.
Near the end, the levelling declined, and I confirmed that the melee spear and horseback spear, together, increased the skill from 4 to 5.

The time required to reach this point was a total of 75 hours, spanning 15 days.
Of course, there were also times in between where I would work on expanding my maximum MP or have special training with Mum.
When I spent too much time on throwing spears and the work became dull, I would concurrently recite from the dictionary or the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』.

By the way, Steph had looked uncomfortably at me, who had been immersed in this work, as if to ask what was so enjoyable about it, but…… well, let's ignore it.

And thus, in conclusion, I confirmed that items that aren't 'spears' will indeed not work for [Throwing Spear Techniques].
It was a slightly disappointing result.
However, as a byproduct of the experiments, I acquired [Shuriken Skills], [Flying Sword Techniques], [Throwing Axe Skills] and [Knife Throwing], an addition of 4 skills.

Incidentally, my current status looks like this.

《Edgar Chrebl

Level 31
HP 63/63
MP 1911/1911

Skills
• Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –

[Instant Interpretation] –

• Legendary class
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –

• Master class
[Physics Magic] 7
[Enchant Magic] 3
[Mana Control] 6
[Letterless Invocation] 6

• General
[Throwing Spear Techniques] 5
[Flying Sword Techniques] 2
[Shuriken Techniques] 3
[Throwing Axe Techniques] 2
[Knife Throwing] 2
[Fire Magic] 6
[Water Magic] 2
[Wind Magic] 6
[Earth Magic] 2
[Light Magic] 2
[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Telekinesis Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Simultaneous Invocation] 9 (MAX)

《Goddess of Virtue's Blessing +1》》

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18. On a Rainy Day (Firebird)

| TOC |

——It's raining today.

"Raain, raaain"

While humming with a speaking style fit for a 7 months old (with the appearance of a 3-year-old) like I just remembered to, I turn the pages of a book in the Study.

"Mou, it's terrible, the laundry won't dry this way."

Grumbled Steph, sitting on the chair with me on her knees
….Steph, since you are my exclusive maid you don't even do laundry.

"At any rate, Young Master Ed is amazing~. Me, if I even just look at a book my head starts to hurt."

Saying that, Steph takes a peek at the book near my hands.
Steph's plentifully developed *those* are touching the back of my head.
It's really a size that's unlikely to belong to 16 years old. Outrageous!

Spread out on top of the desk are the book『Abaddon Magic Compilation』, a dictionary, and a notebook for taking notes.
A notebook is apparently more expensive than in the previous world, but Julia-kaasan said I can use it as much as I want.

The『Abaddon Magic Compilation』's shortcoming is that it's lengthy and dull, but it's really educational.
It's been with me ever since my consciousness returned after reincarnating.
On the topic of language, it has everything about how to write and read the letters, how to spell words and even pronunciation.
About magic, it has how one can even identify the type of magic from the flow of invocation.
Furthermore, about the creation of this world, the races living within it, the cultures and customs of the era Abaddon lived in, I could learn about even those, even if just bits and pieces.
But then, according to [Appraise], Abaddon was a scholar of magic in the 10th century, so now in the 13th century, there are many things that don't apply the same way.

Among the descriptions that are in『Abaddon Magic Compilation』there is one that grabbed my attention.

It's about incantations.

First, I recall the incantation for mom's《Fire Storm》.
『——ト・ソ・ソ・ト・ト・λ・λ(Flame! Become a whirlwind that burns away

everything!)——《Fire Storm》!』

Mom combined 7 magic letters there and chanted the incantation.
According to『Abaddon Magic Compilation』this method of combination is called the Direct Connection Method.

By the way, according to『Abaddon Magic Compilation』there is another method of chanting called the Concatenation Method.

What I want you to remember is that the magic alphabet in this world is also used as a common alphabet.

For example,

・π(Aqua)= a

・Ω(Gaia)= o

・λ(Wind)= u

・ᚦ(Flame)= i(e)（i that is close to e）

The magic letters for the Four Basic Elements correspond to the 4 vowels of this world.

I'm sorry that this explanation is all over the place, but in this world called Marquekt there exists an official language called「Marquekt Common Language」.

According to Abaddon's theory, the fact that magic alphabet=common alphabet is the reason why a common language could come into existence in Marquekt.
Where magic is used, almost inevitably the same common alphabet is also used and therefore hardly any regional differences could develop, at least in the case of the written word.

Putting that aside, the magic alphabet in this world is also used to form common sentences.

The more intuitive people perhaps already realized.

In short, the chants that are using the Concatenation Method are created by regarding the magic letters as a sentence, and using that as a chant for spell invocation.

Let's take a concrete example.
The magic letters used in mom's《Fire Storm》are,

ᚦ・ᚡ・ᚡ・ᚦ・ᚦ・λ・λ

The effects of those are, Flame, Spread, Spread, Flame, Flame, Wind, Wind.

Here, the ᚦ(Flame) letters are「i(e)」, λ(Wind) letters are「u」, but the ᚡ(Spread) represents the consonant「s」.

So mom's spell can be read as,

i(e)、s、s、i(e)、i(e)、u、u

Saying it simply, it's something like *issiiuu*.

Furthermore, the ordering of magic letters has some leeway, so they can be reordered like an anagram.
An example for this would be,

i, siu, siu

in which order saying *isiusiu* would be roughly equivalent to performing the chant of

『Flame! Become a whirlwind that burns away everything!』

There are 2 advantages to doing it this way.
By reconstructing the sentences used in the chant, the chant can be shortened.
Also, by using a「sentence」that isn't used in ordinary conversations, the contents of the chant can be made indiscernible to enemies.

There is 1 demerit.
The chant becomes short, but it also becomes removed from the natural language, so the necessary image for the invocation of the spell becomes harder to form.

The merits are big and the demerit is basically insignificant for me who has [No Fatigue].

Furthermore, this is not written in the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』, but perhaps one could further reconfigure that compressed chant and prepare a sentence that has some relevance to the image.
For example, in the case of《Fire Storm》, perhaps there is a possibility of finding a word that is related to fire by reordering those i×4、s×2、u×2 letters, and by using that word as a part of the chant, it would strengthen the image.

Or possibly, utilizing the shortness of the chant one could construct a Super Multiple Concatenated Spell, that has not just 7, but 10, 20, 30 or even more letters.

Or yet another possibility.
By combining the above-mentioned 2 methods, one could perhaps compile a phrase that although sounds like a natural phrase, but it's in fact a chant at the same time—— a「Magic Phrase」if you will.

For example, imagine having the phrase「Good day.」be a「Magic Phrase 」that serves as the chant for a protection magic.
If the other party takes a friendly approach then you can discard the chant, but if the other party exhibits hostile behavior, then all you have to do is speak the keyword and activate the spell to protect yourself.

Only, the combination of magic letters apparently follows a highly complicated ruleset, so you can't know for sure if the combination in question is functioning properly until you've conducted an experiment with it.
But for me who has [No Fatigue], I can repeatedly do the increasingly dull process of performing the experiment and verifying the results, in a short time.

Well, with my current skill level that finally just allowed me to stabilize《Flame Lance》with its 2 letter invocation, this is only a dream within a dream for now.

Then, knocking could be heard from the other side of the study's door.
From the other side of the door the voice of the maid that was currently serving as a waitress could be heard.
"Young Master Ed. Lunch has been served."

"Ai—"

I replied, then had Steph lower me from her lap.

I get easily pre-occupied by magic and skills, but I must also learn to use this 3 year old body of mine.
Steph always wants to carry me, but I make it a point to always walk with my own feet.

But, because my head was full of thoughts related to「Magic Phrases」I apparently neglected to watch my footing that day.

"Fugyaa-!?"

I tripped near the staircase and with a weird yelp I tumbled all the way down the staircase.
Finally, I also magnificently hit my head in the pillar of the first floor.
"Ouch—!"

"Kyaa, Young Master Ed!"

I thought it was with a momentum that wouldn't end just by me saying 'ouch'.
Steph started hurriedly running down the stairs, but for some reason her legs got tangled in nothing and she also started falling just like me.
I quickly used [Physical Magic] and caught Steph.

"Thank you very much…. Are you alright!?"

Steph is worried, but…. hm, it doesn't hurt as much as I would've thought…..?

If anything, my biggest injury is the grazing of skin on my knee.

"——Edgar-kun!? What happened!?"

Julia-kaasan rushed out of the dining room.

"I-, I'm terribly sorry! Young Master Ed slipped and fell down the stairs!"

Steph bowed so deep, that her head almost reached the floor even while standing.

Steph is my personal maid, so her job is to watch over me so this kind of injury doesn't happen.

Even though I fell down on my own accord, since I'm still a 7 months old child, the responsibility lies with one that watches over me.

"Because I, rushed."

I tried persuading mom by saying that.

"….well, if Edgar-kun says so. But please be careful in the future?"

"Yes….. I'm terribly sorry….."

Steph became disheartened.

"Edgar-kun, are you hurt?"

"Looks like…..not"

While I looked at my body confused,

"Aah, because Edgar-kun's level went up in the fortress. We don't know without checking, but your HP should probably be quite high."

If the HP is high the injuries get lighter?

[Appraise] just the HP.

《Edgar Chrebl. HP:59/63》

My HP went down!?

The decrease is by 4——that was my maximum HP when I was at Level 1.

In other words——if my level didn't go up, I would've died?

While hiding my internal turmoil,

"I see~. I'm hungry~"

I tried dodging the issue by saying that, then I had Julia-kaasan bring me to the dining room.

In truth, it wouldn't be strange even if Steph got fired.

I could've walked, but Julia-kaasan wanted to take me since it was just after an accident.
I got carried to the dining room while I wiggled my legs.

But HP, huh.

A while ago, when I [Appraised] Julia-kaasan, I was surprised by how high her HP was.
That time Julia-kaasan's HP was 79. That is in fact nearly 8 times the value of an adult Level 1 male.
I've found the possibility unbelievable that mom wouldn't die even if stabbed by a slasher.

After that, when I was fighting at the Ranzrak Fortress against Goleth, who was the leader of the <Black Wolf Fang> and also an apostle of the Evil God Monguenues.
His HP was whittled down by the stones thrown by [Physical Magic], but there were no clear injuries on him.
At that time, I thought it was because of Goleth's skill, [Toughness], but it may have been because of his HP value that has been inflated by the Evil God's Add.

According to the Goddess's explanation, HP is made up of a power——she called it Gift, that is granted by god in times of Level Up, that is combined with the person's own physical strength during Growth Sleep.

Then, this kind of thing may be possible.

——If the maximum HP goes up, even when suffering the same damage the injuries get lighter.

To be exact, if the damage is comparatively smaller than the maximum HP, then the injury becomes lighter by the same proportion.

I was just silently thinking about HP while eating, so Julia-kaasan was looking very bored.

I was a bit disheartened as I returned to the study, where I resumed reading while listening to the sound of rain.

Let's make sure I have a fun chat with mom at dinner.

The talks with Julia-kaasan are enjoyable for me too, so no problem.

I was thinking that, but——

"——Edgar-kun! A carrier pigeon has arrived from Al-kun!"

Throwing open the study's door with a 'bam', Julia-kaasan rushed in with a letter in one hand and a full-faced smile.

| TOC |

19. Rumours (Firebird)

| TOC |

——Two days later.
Julia-kaasan and I reached the neighboring village Riverette

The distance to Riverette village from Corbett village, where the mansion is, is half a day by carriage.
The day before yesterday we received a notice from dad, the next day we finished preparing for the journey, then today we arrived in Riverette village like so.

Regarding what Alfred-tousan's carrier pigeon was about, in short,
——The work in Ranzrack Fortress still won't be over for a while. So please head in the direction of the capital with Edgar. I will follow you with fast horses later.
The contents were roughly this.

Very much resembling Corbette village, Riverette village had the image of a typical farming village.
They are so similar that if you were to put it right beside Corbette village and ask people to search for differences, then perhaps even its residents would mistake one for the other.
This area is a reclaimed land by nature and the four villages in the territory of Viscount Cherbl were settled at the same time, so they closely resemble each other and are even called quadruplet villages.
Corbett , Riverette , Trenadette , Kuuret.

These are a bit jumbled versions of words that mean「first」, 「second」, 「third」, 「fourth」in Common Marquekt Language.
In other words, First village, Second village, Third village, Fourth village, an exceedingly simple naming convention.

Julia-kaasan and I (and Steph) are staying at the house of the village chief of the Second village (Riverette village).
One reason was that the sun almost set already, but even so, it wouldn't have been impossible to reach the next village (Third village).

The reason why we decided to stay at this village was that the village chief wanted to welcome mom, who is the wife of the Viscount.
We are just waiting for dad to catch up during this journey anyway, so mom accepted the village chief's invitation and decided to ask about the general situation of the village as we spend a night here in Riverette village.

This was also in the notice brought by the carrier pigeon, dad asked us to hear out the people if we have time for it.
'Because if I'm also there, there is a possibility they would hesitate to speak their mind', he wrote.
Dad is not the type to act too much like a noble and he is quite a candid person, but to the

people, he is no doubt a person that is above the clouds.

On the other hand, mom has that personality and she is also an ex-adventurer, so it's easier for her to mix with the locals.
And even if there are some misguided fellows that would make a move on her, all it would result in is that they would realize that the nickname of《Fire Prison Witch》is not just for show.

Even if it's the village chief's house it's a modest one, much like the old Japanese houses, it is a grass-roofed single-storey wooden house.

Even so, it's a comfortable, nice and cozy house.
We took off our shoes and went to the living space around the central fireplace, where we listened to the villagers that gathered, but after a while, my eyelids felt like they got heavier.
Although the reason why my eyelids felt heavy was only because I was influenced by the memories from my previous life, in reality, thanks to [No Fatigue], I was as awake as I usually am.
So I didn't miss a news like this.

"——Fairies?"

"That's right, madam. Fairies snatched away the son from Volvo's family."

According to the spokesperson-like man, this is what happened.

Apparently, half a year ago a woodcutter suddenly started saying that he saw fairies deep in the forest.

However the fairies are not something that anyone can normally see, if one doesn't have an ability to sense the supernatural, or didn't drank a bunch of alcohol and got drunk, one wouldn't be able to see, they say.
In other words, that woodcutter, seizing the opportunity that no one was around, had a bit during work.

Since it was from a guy like that, no one believed what he said.
But the woodcutter insisted that he saw them.
Some mean villager then started saying that they should make a bet.
After that, when led by the woodcutter, the villager that made a bet with the woodcutter went to the place where the woodcutter saw the fairies, and there a strange pattern that looked like something between a writing and a picture was drawn all over the ground.

Even then, he said it was part of his charade and that didn't make him the winner of the bet.
That being said, there wasn't any evidence that is was, in fact, his doing, so with the mediation of the village chief, the bet was invalidated.
Some people still teased the woodcutter for a while, but even that died down in time and the villagers all forgot about the fairy business.

"But then, it happened just a few days ago. Volvo's boy——Boyce is his name, a pleasant

boy around 5 years old that doesn't resemble him at all, has disappeared all of a sudden, I say."

Volvo was a villager that made the bet with the woodcutter in the previous story.
His son, Boyce, didn't return after saying he was going to play near the river.

"We searched downstream of the river and even deep in the forest with the adults of the village but didn't find him anywhere. When the people of the village were talking about how this or that may have happened, that woodcutter guy started saying some daft things."

"Daft things?"

"By daft he means foolish, madam."

No, Julia-kaasan probably knows that already.
I ask in her stead.

"What did he say?"

"Hee, Young Master can already speak? The Master is smart too, so it's no wonder if the child is also clever."

Enough of that already!

After I glared at him a bit, the spokesperson that apparently intentionally played silly let out a small strained laugh, then continued with the story.

"Yeah, sorry about that. Ah, I was talking about the woodcutter. You probably suspect already. The woodcutter started saying that the ones that snatched Boyce away were the fairies."
"The faeries….?"

Julia-kaasan charmingly tilted her head.

I also share mom's doubt.

They say that faeries are fundamentally good beings.

There is a paragraph about faeries in the『Abbadon Magic Compilation』and it states that fairies are innocent familiars created by an ancient and legendary race called Pioneer Elves.
It's one of my favorite memorized parts, so there is no mistake.

"At first, no one in the village given it a thought. That woodcutter guy must have drank so much he is a bit not right in the head anymore, everyone thought that while ignoring him. It's his fault for just drinking all the time, saying the forest is scaary scaary."

"Then?"

"But, after a while others started saying what if it was the work of fairies. I thought it was

idiotic, but as someone that manages the people of the village, I can't ignore it. So to decide it once and for all we went looking in the forest."

Then, in the forest, the thing that looked like something between writing and a picture that was supposedly drawn by fairies has been left there.

"Different from the one, the woodcutter found?"

I asked without thinking.

"It was a different one. For one, it was half a year ago when the woodcutter said that he saw fairies. There is no way a pattern drawn on the ground can last that long."

"Where is, that pattern?"

"Deep in the forest, upstream from where Boyce said he was going to play. We thought the Lord would want to see it so we fenced it off."

'It creeps everyone out, so no one goes near' the spokesperson said.

"Upstream…."

"It means the upper part of the river"

No, I know what it means.

If there is a fence then I would be able to find it without a guide.

While I was thinking that, Julia-kaasan also asked the spokesperson something.

"You didn't pay attention to what the woodcutter-san was saying before, so why did it change after?"

"It was the innkeeper that started saying it that time. Don't know if it was before or after that traveler stayed here."

"Traveler?"

"He said he was coming from the direction of Corbette as I remember. After staying one night he said he's heading to the capital. He shared stories about foreign countries, so everyone had a good time."

"Fhnn……?"

Mom is staring into space while tilting her head.
I try doing the same, but it's not like there is something to see.

All I see is a sooty beam.

That time, the door of the living space suddenly opened.

"——The fairies didn't do anything wrong!!"

Shouting that, an around 5 years old child came running in.

"H-hey, Aino! You are in front of the guests!"

From the look of the chiding spokesperson, she is probably his daughter.
Not resembling her father, she is a charming little girl.
She looks older than me though.

"Fairy-san saved me when I was lost and in trouble!"

"Are you still saying that? You had a fever that time. What you saw was most likely a hallucination."

"No way! It was a blond spirally haired fairy-san! She was very kind!"

'Ueeee', Aino-chan started crying.
Taking a sidelong glance at the flustered spokesperson, Julia-kaasan tries to pacify Aino-chan.
Maybe Aino-chan got tired from crying, she fell asleep near the fireplace.

"I'm sorry, madam."

"It's okay. She is very charming. We don't have girls at home so I'm envious."

The 3 children of Alfred-tousan's former wife are all men and I'm also a man.
If we say 4 then it feels like a lot, but we are nobles and mom's own child is only me, so one may yet be born in the future.

"It looks like Aino-chan is worried about Boyce-kun."

Aah, I see how it is.
I think it's a bit precocious, but they must've been close friends.

"All right! Let me do my best too!"

"Huh, madam?"

"Even if I don't look like it, I'm an ex A-rank adventurer."

'Ahem', mom exclaimed.
There the village chief, who only watched over the discussion with the spokesperson, cut in suddenly.

"We have heard much about you. But is it alright? This village can't prepare a fitting reward for an A-rank adventurer?"

“It’s okay~. This is Al-kun’s domain. It’s the Lord’s duty to protect his people, right?”

“I-, I see……”

While looking perplexed, the village chief gave an acknowledging response.
If it’s an A-rank then perhaps, is probably what he is thinking, but the Julia-kaasan in front of him doesn’t look that reliable, it’s probably something like that.
It’s unknown whether mom has noticed that look on the village chief or not.

“Edgar-kun, wait here in the house, okay?”

Saying that she set out at once to gather information from the village.

…….

What will I do, you ask?

Of course, staying patiently at the village chief’s house is not even an option.
After I lost consciousness by doing the maximum MP raising and made Steph believe that I fell asleep I woke right up.

Only one thing was on my mind.

Fairies!

Wanna see!

| TOC |

20. Deciphering

"Hmm, it's rather dark."

It has been around 30 minutes since Julia-kaasan went out to gather information.
When the sun had completely set, I produced a small light at my fingertips using ∩ (light) and sprinted inside the forest, arriving at the river where voice-kun disappeared.

The river was around 5 metres wide. The width was approximately the same as that of the moat at Ranzrack fortress
The water was so clear that when I brought the light at my fingertip towards it, I could see the fish swimming at the bottom of the river.
I'd like to make some grilled fish, but I'll save it for another time.

I drew ♭ three times and leapt over the river.
I used one of the ♭ the instant I leapt, and another for the moment of landing. The final one was prepared in case of an accident.
I also practiced with it many times in the courtyard at the estate, but using it freely in such a vast space felt good.

I skipped along the riverside, heading upstream, and a fence came within sight after about 10 minutes.
The width of the river narrowed by about half, but contained many bends instead.
On the edge of that river was an unnaturally open space.
It was a round area with a diameter of about 5 metres, and my first impression was that it was like an open court.

Surrounding the centre of that clearing was the wooden fence that the village chief told us about.
Rather than a wooden fence, numerous wooden planks were driven into the ground and tied together with rope.
Through a gap in the wooden fence, I tossed a ∩ into the middle of the fenced area.

"……Heh."

On the ground, a design that was neither character nor picture was indeed drawn.
The design was quite complex.
The pattern contained approximately 30 small patterns, and they were lined up in order.
I don't know the significance of the small patterns in detail, but several of the patterns were duplicated.

……Or rather, aren't these sentences?

"Magic symbols? No, that's wrong….."

In Marquekt, there's a common tongue.
That's because the magic symbols that are used to invoke magic are utilised as general

letters.
Since there is a common skill with the name of magic, at least in regards to characters, it's easy to use magic symbols.
Thus, even if the spoken language is somewhat accented, in terms of the characters, the magic symbols should be used worldwide.

In short, characters with the exception of magic symbols do not exist in Marquekt.

"Wait….. Other characters……"

In a hurry, I open the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』that I was carrying in my arms.

"There it is, Ancient magic symbols."

Ancient Magic Symbols.
They are the powerful and yet delicate magic symbols used more than a millennium ago, the origins of the current magic symbols.
The current magic symbols were more concise so they were manageable for everyone, but these ancient magic symbols seemed to be vastly superior to the current magic symbols in terms of power.
But then, apparently they had been too hard to control and were passed down in error, and only the magic symbols after simplification were currently circulated.
It seems that Abaddon had also investigated the ancient magic symbols in-depth, but it's stated that he couldn't understand very much.

However, Abaddon reproduced fragments of the ancient magic symbols he discovered in historic ruins beside the ancient magic symbols article.

While suppressing my excitement, I compare the patterns before me to the reproduction in the book but——

"Hmm? Is it different, maybe?"

The impression I got was that if the reproduced ancient magic symbols were printed kanji, the patterns before my eyes would be written in a girl's rounded handwriting.
Decorations were added here and there, and it was hard to specify the original text.

"……For the time being, let's transcribe it and return."

I copy down the design within the fence into my notebook and return to the village after confirming there were no mistakes.

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Midnight——

Taking care not to wake my happily sleeping mother beside me, I got out of bed.
In the shadow of the desk, I use ∩ after lowering its intensity and gaze at the transcribed

pattern many times.

However,

"……I don't get it."

Due to having no mental fatigue thanks to the effects of [No Fatigue], I was able to continue deliberating for many hours.
But no matter how much I thought, I didn't understand what I didn't understand.
Since it's not like my intelligence improved.

There's the tale of the US armed forces deciphering the Japanese army's codes during the Pacific War, but I suppose they were able to decipher them by gathering world-leading mathematicians with brains and newly-built computers.
Something like cryptography might be impossible for me, an amateur.

"Eei"

My not being that smart wasn't something that started just now.
What was my forte?

Right, it's simple work!

I spread out my notebook under the desk and tried to write down those transcribed patterns on it over and over.

10 times, 20 times……

My hand did not tire as I don't tire physically, but my muscles ache when I overdo it.
While taking a break occasionally, 30 times, 40 times……

Somehow I grasped the writing method.

I felt as though I grasped the pen's natural route and the stroke order.

50 times, 60 times……

Soon I was able to write the characters even without looking at the transcribed pattern.

Afterwards, a further 70 times, 80 times……

Suddenly, I felt the mana inside my body move when writing the characters.
However, the mana dispersed when I directed my attention to it.

90 times.
My mana is moving again.
Somehow it seems like my mana is moving along a specific passage.
Despite this, my mana ends up dispersing as soon as I proceed onto the next character.
Nevertheless, I grasped the sensation.

And then, the 100th time.
The moving mana takes shape.
This is——

fwoosh……!

Crap, it's a fire!

"π!"

Ah, that was dangerous.

The notebook was burned and became sopping wet, but the situation of producing a small fire in someone else's home was avoided anyhow.

……Ah, there's a burn on the floor as well.

……It won't be discovered if I keep quiet, right?

I understood here that this pattern was of magic symbols in any case.

Whilst writing over and over, I remember the character forms, and from the faint movement of mana, I became able to imagine the effects of those characters in my subconscious.

These ancient magic symbol-like characters were more complex than the current magic symbols, and yet they seemed to hold different traits.

These characters were also pictures.

It was easy to understand for me who was a Japanese person, the ancient magic symbols were hieroglyphs derived from pictures like the Egyptian runes and Chinese characters.
They were most likely simplified accordingly through the passage of times and became the current magic symbols that were similar to an alphabet.

Hence, even though I did nothing but tracing the character forms, the image of the spells that could be invoked gradually permeated into my brain.

Well, I never thought that I'd be able to invoke real magic though……

For the moment, I dry the wet notebook using the original magic I secretly practiced, "ト λ——《Dryer》."
The pages ended up a little stiff, but it couldn't be helped.
Fortunately, I had almost reached the end thanks to my transcribing a hundred times.

It was dangerous to do any more experimenting indoors, so I quietly sneaked out of the bedroom and exited out into the village chief's back yard.

And then, this time I etched the pattern on the ground with a handy twig.

For the time being, I will also do this 100 times.

I use ∃ to dispel the magic before it is invoked, prioritising the comprehension of the complete pattern.

——Now then, it's straightforward work so let me get to it.

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When the night started to grow lighter, I finally grasped the full pattern.

It was a considerably interesting result.

Firstly, this pattern has a mix of valid and invalid components.

It's the same with the current magic symbols but when multiple symbols are invoked, there are characters that can go together and those that can't.

Even in this pattern, components that form spells when combined, and components that can't combine are mixed together.

I don't believe that the person who drew the pattern made a mistake.
Because it doesn't seem likely for a being who knows the ancient magic symbols to make such a rudimentary mistake.

In other words, there's a high possibility that these components that don't form spells have been intentionally inserted.

Secondly, the matter of whether these characters can be read in a sentence, assuming that they are magic symbols.

From the conclusion, it doesn't seem possible.

I tried invoking the ancient magic symbols in practice, determining the corresponding current magic symbols with the same effects and replacing them.
However, the 'composition' formed by doing that was nothing but gibberish.

But, somehow this incomprehensibleness of meanings was 'fishy'.

That out-of-place miscommunication as though the existing words were replaced with several characters apiece.

From the above facts, a certain conviction of mine was deepened.

That was,

——This is a code.

These valid components and invalid components.

Comprehensible and incomprehensible words.

I recall often solving such cryptograms when I enrolled in primary school.
Cryptograms like the ‘tanuki code’.

Since it is a code, there should be a rule to solving it, just like the ‘tanuki code’.

And the hints for clarifying the rule are all present.
Perhaps, if I remove the invalid components for magic, the remaining components will form words based on some sort of rule.
That should be fine.

There is no doubt that there is a message in here, even if it is in code.
Since there is a message, there is someone who composed it, and there is someone whom the writer intended for to receive.

To put it simply, this is something that someone addressed to someone else.
The writer is someone who possesses knowledge of the ancient magic symbols. For now, it should be fine to assume it’s a faery.

In that case, who was this composed for?
A person who possesses knowledge on the combining of magic symbols and can decipher the ancient magic symbols.
There’s also the possibility of it being a private message to a fellow faery, but if it was just that then there would be no need for such a troublesome code.

Just from my intuition, I think it’s not that.

——This is a written challenge addressed to humans who are well-informed about magic.

Faeries are good-natured beings, but they are also known for being mischievous.
Leaving a code in a noticeable place for a person with too much free time is indeed something that they might do.

“But in that case——”

That means the faeries are unrelated to the spiriting away of Boyce-kun.
It’s true that there is the possibility that they abducted a child to have their code solved, but that would surely exceed the scope of a ‘prank’.

But then, just who abducted Boyce-kun?

In order to find out the answer to that, I tackled the cryptography.

——And, I somehow managed to finish solving the code before breakfast was ready.

21. Fairy Village (Firebird)

Dododododododo……

What's that sound, you ask?

It's the sound of the waterfall that's in front of my eyes.

This place is the high upstream of the previously mentioned river.
The time is late at night.

It's a beautiful moonlit night with a full moon out.

A smallish waterfall of about 10 meters tall is sparkling as it's illuminated by the moonlight.

However, it seems that's not the only thing that's sparkling.

From the other side of the waterfall——From the cavity that is hidden by the flow of the waterfall, a faint light is leaking out.

By using ♭ (Physik) and π (Aqua), I deflect the curtain of the waterfall a bit and slide into the cave.

The cave is less than 2 meters tall.
For an adult, this should be a place that has a feeling of restriction.

My current self is not even 1 meter tall, so I proceed deeper in without minding it.

This cave appears to be a limestone cave.
This space, where a few stalactites are standing in a row, is pleasantly cool.

It's not just this cave, the air temperature has fallen a bit lately.
It seems that the time when I regained my reincarnated consciousness was somewhere in the summer.
With the coming and going to the fortress and the waiting period before we set out to the Second Village, all-in-all about 50 days have passed.
Therefore, the season is soon nearing autumn.
From the fact that the summer wasn't that hot, it's probably safe to assume that the latitude here is around the same as Europe's.
There is a possibility that the winter will be quite cold.
While thinking along these lines, I head towards the source of the faint light.

That being said, it's not a long distance.

The length of the cave should be about 10 meters.
Since it's pitch black and I'm fumbling, it feels much longer, but it should be about that long.

There was a small room at the end of the cave.

Its size is about as big, that if a few adults were to stand in it, it would feel cramped.

In the middle of that room, there is a light shining from above, and there is a lot of white clover-like flowers glowing there.

Also, in front of it, there are a few letters that are similar to that cryptogram.

——I already know the method used to decipher it.

As for the process, it's not that difficult once you understand it.

First, we replace the pictograms with the corresponding modern magic letters.
As usual, I memorized the correspondence chart, so I can finish this in no time.

Next, we remove the combinations that can't be composited for magic.
A good example is ∨ (Spread-diffusion) and ⩒ (Conset-converge).
This impossible combination is used as punctuation.

And then finally——we exchange the vowels.
The answer to 'what do you mean by that' is to exchange for example ⊦(Flame) with its opposite attribute π(Aqua).
And also its reverse, exchange π(Aqua) with ⊦(Flame).

We exchange λ(Wind) and Ω(Gaia) by the same logic.

With this, we gained the unciphered text(normal text) from the cryptogram.

By this process, it has come to light that the rumored pictograph in Marquekt Common Language is「Midnight of the full moon, behind the waterfall」.

And the pictograph in front of me——「Beyond this point, Fairy Village」

With just the first cryptogram I couldn't set aside my doubt that my interpretation was stretching it, but since I could decipher this pictograph with the same method there is no problem.

I've successfully managed to decipher the code left by the fairies.

"It was hard……"

It took me an entire half day before the exchanging of vowels occurred to me.
Since most of the time, if you exchange the vowel(=Four Basic Elements), the spell can still activate.
At one place I realized that the combination I removed as impossible would work if I changed the attribute, so then I tried the other elements in a near round-robin fashion.

As a result, I realized that the simple rule of exchanging the attributes with their opposite would most likely work.
And then, when I succeeded with the deciphering, it was around sundown.

The full moon was tonight, so I hurriedly slipped out of the village chief's house and came to the upstream of the river, where a waterfall would most likely be.

"Beyond this point…..but where?"

The scene of the light hitting the flowers is truly fairytale-like, but this here is the cave's dead end and I can't see any paths that would proceed beyond.

I looked at the flowers for no particular reason, then at the source of light that illuminated the flowers——I looked up.

In that instant——my body was engulfed in a strange sensation.

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A flower covered plains continued on as far as I could see.

Seemingly to the end of the earth, the surface, winding like a benchland or carpet, filled with many kinds of flowers.

And there were——

"Ufufu….." "Ahaha….."

Many somethings that were slightly bigger than a butterfly were flying around.

I strain my eyes, half-convinced of their identity.

These beings, that are emitting various colored light from their bodies, are about the size of those something-or-another dolls from my previous world, and they are human shaped.

Wings that resemble those of the dragonfly and also the butterfly.
Clothes that look like upside down flower petals.
Pastel colored hair.

They are no matter how you look at them——

"Fairies!"

"Kya-!" "Hyaa-!"

I involuntarily exclaimed, so the fairies suddenly distanced themselves from me.

"It's a human!" "A human!"

"Weeell….first in 10 years?" "First in a 100 years!"

The fairies were watching and crowding around me at a distance, but at the end,

"——Human-san?" "——Are you?"

Two fairies fly close to me.
These two look exactly the same, huh.
The one in the right side from my point of view has her hair tied up on the left and the left one has it on the right.
Are they twins or something?

Their eyes were sparkling with hard to contain curiosity.

“Um, yeah….that’s right.”

“How did you get here!?” “Get here~?”

“By deciphering the code on the ground, that was allegedly left by fairies.”

As I was saying that, I started to have a feeling that something was amiss.

But, I didn’t immediately realize what was wrong.

“Ehh-!? You deciphered that code!? Ammaazing!” “Amazing~!”

“Nah, not really that…”

I act humble while scratching my head.

“Taking that prank seriously and deciphering it, you really have a lot of free time!” “A lot of free time~!”

“Shutup! Hey, that was really a prank!?”

It took an entire day to decipher that!

“…..then you didn’t have any business with the one that managed to decipher it?”

“Business~?” “Business-?”

The twin fairies both tilt their heads.
It’s vexing that I’ve found that a bit cute.

“Ah, that’s right!” “That’s right-!”

The twin fairies clap their hands together with a pop.

“”When humans come, Big Sister told us to bring them to her!””

…….And thus, I was guided by the twin fairies and we went to the place of that so-called 「Big Sister」.

There I finally noticed the unusual phenomenon that happened to me.

“…..I’ve become a bit bigger?”

It's hard to notice since there are only fairies nearby, but my originally 3 years old-like body became that of a first grader in elementary school.
My pronunciation also improved, so the bones and muscles of my face have also probably changed.

"Because this is the Fairy Village" "Fairy Village~"

According to their explanation, this place called Fairy Village is a half-material and half-spirit world.

"Humans get younger" "and also get older~"

"Hhnn"

By this logic, it wouldn't be strange if me with my 30 years old soul would get even bigger, but it looks like maybe the body has more influence over it.
…..Or perhaps, because all that baby talk in the last 8 month has caused my mind to regress into a child……

While I was thinking about that, we reached our destination.

It was a log-house on top of a gentle slope.
Not a fairy-sized one, but a proper human-sized one.

The twin fairies vigorously rammed the door of that log-house.

Baan!

""Big sister! It's a guest!""

I wonder what happened, but in short the fairies are too small and it's hard to open the door.

"Thank you, Secel, Secela"

It seems those were the names of the twin fairies.

Inside the log-house, there was a fairy, about the same size as Secel & Secela.

Leaving aside the half-transparent swallowtail butterfly patterned wings, she had an unexpected blond drill twin-tail hairstyle.

Her facial features give off a dignified ojou-sama feeling.

"…..cute"

"Wh-, c- , cu-…..!?"

I unintentionally whispered it, and the twin-tailed fairy blushed at me.

“Big Sister is shy一” “Is shy~”

“Aah, you’re noisy! I will talk with the human so the two of you go away!”

“Big Sister got angry!” “Got angry~!”

Secel and Secela left while smiling and screaming ‘kya~’.

I let out an unintentional sigh of relief.

To tell the truth, it’s hard to keep company with someone that high-spirited as those two…..

“Please excuse them, they mean no harm.”

Said the Twin-tail-san

“Aah, no… I think they are good kids.”

“Indeed. There are no bad kids in this village.”

Saying that, Twin-tail-san has proudly puffed up her chest.

“——I will formally introduce myself. My name is Melby. This Tetelutia Fairy Village’s Fairy Chief.”

So she is the leader here.

That why it was「Big Sister」.

“My name is Ka……no, Edgar Chrebl”

I almost said my name from my previous world, but I hurriedly corrected myself.

“I see. It looks like a very lovely human has come to us. ….hey, wait a minute”

The formally Twin-tail-san, Melby inspected every part of my body from the top of my head to my toes while fluttering around me.

After finishing her inspection, Melby said with knitted eyebrows.

“It looks like……an inexplicable human has come”

I don’t what she could have seen, but Melby has said this.

I also got curious, so I secretly use [Appraise] on Melby.

《Melby（From Tetelutia Fairy Village, Fairy Chief——◆＃％[＜□……》

Huh?

"….Hey, you have some nerve to sneakily try and peak at a lady's secrets?"

I was found out!?

"Well, humans probably won't be able to notice it, but against a fairy such as myself, that degree of concealment will be found out."

"No, well, that was….."

To the pale looking me that was looking for excuses, she said,

"Nevermind. It doesn't look like you had any bad intentions anyway."

Saying that, Melby disappeared to the back of the log-house.

I waited perhaps 5 minutes.

From the back, Melby was unsteadily flying this way, holding a tea-cup.

"He-,Here….tea."

"You shouldn't have."

"Just obediently accept people's kindness!"

"Y-,yes"

In front of the puffing Melby, I obediently drink from the tea.

"….delicious"

If I were to compare it to the previous world, it would be a taste similar to rosehip tea with added honey.

"I see. I'm glad."

Saying that, Melby smiled sweetly.

After that, I accidently made her melancholic.

"My Master liked that tea. There were no visitors lately, so there were no opportunities to serve it."

"Your Master?"

"The one who created us fairies was our Master, a Pioneer Elf. The fairies in other villages were also created by different Pioneer Elves."

Then the description in『Abaddon Magic Compilation』was right.

“Where is your Master?”

“…….”

Melby’s face darkens and she casts down her eyes.

“Ah, no, I’m sorry. I asked something bad.”

“No, don’t worry about it. …..Rather than that, Edgar, why did you come to this village?”

It feels like she forcefully changed the subject, but I decided to go along with it.

“I deciphered the code left by fairies. So, when I went to the back of the waterfall at midnight on a full moon there was something shining there, and then before I noticed I was here.”

“Hnnn. You deciphered that one, huh.”

Melby stares at my face with great interest.
Yeah, she is cute.

“And also, I’ve come to confirm the rumors from the village.”

“Rumors?”

“I would like you to hear me out without getting angry…..”

“Okay. What is it?”

“….There was a child disappearance case in Riverette Village, you see. Some villagers are making a racket about how it may be the work of fairies.”

“What’s with that!? There is no way that’s true!”

Melby hit the table with a ‘Bam!’ and jumped up.
…..but you said you wouldn’t get angry.

“Th-that’s why I said don’t get angry. I heard that fairies are virtuous existences, so I thought the rumors were suspicious.”

“Wh-what would fairies even do with human children after kidnapping them anyway!”

“Uhm, well…..eat them?”

“We won’t eat them! How rude!”

Melby seems really angry.

….yeah, really that’s what I thought would be the case.

“That code was near the place that kid disappeared from. So then, it looks like they suspected they were related.”

“We leave that code around the forest at fixed intervals. I ask the fairies that go to play in the forest to leave them.”

“Why are you doing something like that?”

“…..that is….”

For some reason, Melby stopped speaking.

According to『Abbadon Magic Compilation』fairies can’t lie.

That’s why, that means if there is something that is hard to talk about, Melby can’t make something up and dodge the question.

“But, it’s true. There is nothing to gain for fairies from kidnapping children. To begin with, we are not built in a way that we would be able to…….”

Mn.
It’s not the 3 rules of robotics, but since fairies were created by Pioneer Elves, it’s perhaps obvious that there would be such restrictions.

“Well, it’s difficult to trust us if we just simply ask you to. So, until we are cleared of your suspicions you should stay in this village. If you want to see some places I will also show you around.”

“I’m not suspecting you, so it’s alright.”

“No. If there are other humans that are suspicious then stay and look around.”

“But as you can see I’m a child. If I stay overnight on my own, what would mom and the others say.”

“….Now that you mention it you are a child, huh. I had a feeling like I was talking to an about 30 years old adult.”

Gulp.

“If you are worried about the time I don’t think there is a problem. Since the flow of time in the Fairy Village is one tenth of the outside world.”

So if I stay a whole day even, only 2.4 hours would pass outside.

It’s like the Palace of the Dragon King.

“Do I also get older by that much?”

“You don’t. Since this is a half-spirit world. It’s like you are leaving your body behind on the other side.”

“Isn’t the other half material?”

“That’s true, but for the material substance, the outside time applies. A traveler that visited here before said that.”

Then that means maybe only the mind is on fast-forward or overclocked?

But, at any rate, this is a rare opportunity.

There is no way I would just go home without doing anything when there is a fairy right in front of me.

“….If you insist that much, I will stay for a while.”

When I said that, Melby’s face suddenly lit up.

“Really!? Then, there will be a party today!”

Saying that, Melby left the room while humming in a good mood.

…..They wouldn’t just use the suspicions as an excuse, only to use me to liven up the party, would they?

Well, if can frolic around with fairies I wouldn’t really say no to that.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

——At night.

The fairy’s party was over and I was lying down on a bed in the log-house.

Of course, because of [No Fatigue] I won’t be sleeping, but I can’t really raise my magic skills in the house of a fairy either.

Also, there is something on my mind.

This log-house is clearly for human use.

Or rather than human use, it was probably for the Pioneer Elf.

However, there is no Pioneer Elf here.

Since they say they are an ancient race, perhaps they have already perished, but from looking at Melby, I have a feeling that’s not the case.

When Melby says「My Master」, the emotion in her words is not the cherishing of memories of a deceased Master.

Most likely, that「Master」is still alive.

However, she can't meet me.

The fairies are cheerful without limit, but once the topic of「Master」comes up, everyone becomes gloomy.

Of course, there must be some circumstances to that.

So as someone that just happened to come by, I don't want to poke my nose in it.

Thankfully, from what the fairies were saying, there was no possibility that their「Master」would secretly go around Riverette Village and kidnap villagers.

So there is no place for an outsider like me to butt in….. or there shouldn't be.

However, Melby really looks like she is burdened with something.

It feels like she is breaking under the pressure of the chief's position and her own sense of responsibility.

In my previous life, when I was working as an office worker, one my junior girls was in that state.
After that, she felt responsible for a mistake in her work and left the company, I heard nothing about her after that.
It's not like I was responsible for that or anything, but I felt guilty that I didn't lend her a helping hand.

Secel and Secela also.

"Please help Big Sister cheer up" "Cheer up!"

They said.

——Tomorrow, let's try asking Melby.

I was thinking that, but I couldn't calm down while lying there.

I hate my body that doesn't get sleepy at times like these.

Quietly, I get up from the bed and leave the house while being careful not to wake up Melby, who should be sleeping somewhere in the house.

So I start taking a slow walk in the Fairy Village that is faintly bright even after the sun went down.

The flowery plains are continuing to no end, but the fairies only live centered around the log-house it seems.

On the outskirts of that, I've found an old looking temple-like building.

That being said, there is no roof and the walls have also collapsed, so calling it a ruin would be more accurate.

There was a staircase leading down inside there.

Beside the staircase entrance, there is lid-like wooden board that was pushed to the side.

And from the end of the staircase, there was bluish-white light leaking that was inviting me.

That grabbed my attention so I went down the stairs.

Beyond the stairs, it was a limestone cavern.

I went a few meters forwards in the limestone cavern——

"What…. is this?"

There was a giant crystal looking thing.

But not just an ordinary crystal.

Inside the crystal, there was someone imprisoned.

Silver colored long hair, skin so fair it's almost transparent, graceful bodyline. And also,

——Long ears with pointed tips.

"——Pioneer Elf?"

I reflexively used [Appraise] on that person.

《

Alfecia Vilat Maeterlinck(《7 Pillars of Pioneer Elves〈Sage of the Forest〉》《The One who Mastered the Way of Magic》《Sleeping Princess》)

77 years old (1118 years has passed since frozen in time)
Pioneer Elf
Demigod (An existence that has become a half-god due the powerful blessings given by the Gods)
Status Frozen in time

Level 92
HP 179/179
MP 4519/325061 (25061+300000)

Skills

•Mythical Class
[Imitation Genesis] – (Creates a minuscule universe.)
[Four Great Magicks] 4
[Magical Creature Creation] 9 (MAX)
+[Undo] – (A mistake during the manufacturing process can be made non-existent, but only one step.)

•Legendary Class
[Telepathic Communication] 6
[Spirit Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Space-Time Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Dimension Magic] 5
[Dimensional Magical Tool Creation] 9 (MAX)
[Analysis] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –
[Free Chanting] 7
[Mind Unity] 7

•Master class
[Magical Tool Creation] 9 (MAX)
[Space Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Mental Toughness] 9 (MAX)
[Solfège] 9 (MAX)
▪
▪
▪
《Blessing of a God of Virtue+5》(The blessing of the God of Production, Yo Delun. Maximum supplement to the acquisition and learning speed of skills related to production. World Creation related skills unlocked. Skill [Undo] is added.)

《Blessing of a God of Virtue+2》(The blessing of the God of Magic, Attiera. Medium supplement to the acquisition and learning speed of skills related to magic. Enormous amount of MP added.)

》

Wha-……

What, the hell is this?

"——So you've seen it."

My body twitched from the voice that called out to me from behind me.

"——That's right. This is our Master."

When I turned around, Melby was there with a sad smile on her face.

| TOC |

22. Pioneer Elf

"So you saw it."

Melby said with a forlorn look.

"……Was that bad?"

"No. I did say to look as much as you like."

Melby flutters over to the crystal.

"This is a story from over a millennium ago. An evil warlock attacked this hamlet."

"An evil warlock?"

"Yes. I had only just been born at the time so I don't know the details. However, Master freed us and fought the evil warlock."

But, Melby continues,

"……Having taken refuge, we waited for a message saying everything was alright but contact from Master never came no matter how long we waited. We timidly returned to the hamlet, and then——"

At that point, their "Master" was already in the state she is now.

"If you saw her status, then you should understand. Time has stopped for Master inside the crystal. No, this is just a guess, but I think that Master used [Space-Time Magic] to stop her own time the moment she was imprisoned inside the crystal.

Indeed, it doesn't appear likely for the being who imprisoned their "Master" to purposely stop time for her.
Their "Master" probably had time stop as a last resort to protect herself.

"So, this crystal can't be undone?"

"……I can't. At least, I can't do it with my power. I don't know what magic was used to make this crystal—— this separation barrier."

Melby looks down with a gloomy face.

"The crystal itself isn't that solid. On the contrary, it's rather brittle."

Handing me a chisel-like object, Melby tells me to try using it to whittle at the crystal.
Or rather, just where did she produce that from just now?

"That is a dimension chisel. It's a magic tool that was made to shave down the separation

barrier. ——Now then.”

Just like Melby told me, I try poking at the crystal with the chisel.
Simply poking at it didn’t leave a single scratch.
This time, I swing the chisel’s blade downward with force.
There was a faint *snap* and a thin flake separated from the crystal and fell down.

I picked up the shaving.
It was as large as a smartphone, but it was only around 1 millimetre thick.
The edge looked sharp enough to cut my finger.

“This is……?”

“Paring it once produces a flake like that. No matter how much magic or force you put in, that flake will be all that separates from the crystal each time. Hence, it’s called the separating barrier.”

I felt as though my mana had barely been absorbed.
When I check with [Appraisal], I saw that my MP had decreased by 1.
So it only consumes 1 MP and produces something 1 millimetre thick.

“Even in the past, there have been humans who have come all the way here. There were even people who have tried to release the seal. But——”

Even those people who had been patiently shaving away at the surface of the crystal in the beginning became unable to bear it after continuing for several months.

“Nevertheless, the crystal’s thickness is about 1 metre — slightly wider than my shoulder width. Even though the shaved pieces may be thin, you should reach the centre after a thousand times or so. I feel like it could be managed one way or another.”

“——It regenerates.”

“Eh?”

“The crystal regenerates. ——Look.”

The chipped part glows dimly.

After the light disappeared——as expected, the crystal returned to its original state.

You can’t tell if you don’t look closely, but the part that was chipped off seems to have returned to its former thickness.

“……I see, it’s impossible with this.”

No matter how one attacks it, all that separates in one go is a thin shaving.
And that shaving is replenished from the vicinity of the chipped section.

If it was a simple hard barrier then I could just break it with further strength.
I could hope for such.

However, whilst this can be whittled down, I definitely can't whittle through it.
This would be quite hard on the mentality of anyone who tried to dispel the barrier.

I can see the terrible personality of the guy who created this barrier, it's an extremely tricky barrier.

"There have also been several magicians who gathered together and threw magic at it consecutively, but it seems that when the timings of the attacks are too close together, they are regarded as a single attack altogether——even when all the members use all their MP in a concentrated attack, only a single sliver separates from the crystal."

In other words, it can only be steadily shaved down.

"Even so, we know that the regeneration of the shaved part isn't quite perfect. When we dig through approximately half my height's worth — the amount amassed in one day, the regeneration diminishes slightly after that."

Approximately half of Melby's height = roughly 10 centimeters.
If all the shavings are of constant thickness, that's 100 pieces.
However, if one wants to ensure that the width is enough for the pioneer elf female inside to be able to pass through, they would desire a surface area of about 10 smartphones lined up both vertically and horizontally, and would require the work of digging 100 times for each 1 millimetre.
For each millimetre, 100 sections need to be shaved 100 times, which makes it 10, 000 times in total.

…….Wait?

"Wouldn't it be a little easier if you dug a tunnel with which the person inside could pass through by crouching, and only shave as wide as the girth of the person inside?"

"That is no good.
It seems that the mechanics of this separation barrier are such that it supplements for any reciprocal action, and even if you dig a long tunnel to the inside, it closes it off immediately.
The slight delaying of the regeneration is when the barrier is uniformly shaved down on this side."

"How much is a slight bit?"

"……About as much as a single shaving."

"So at that pace, you would only be able to progress 1 millimetre per day no matter how much you dig."

With that pace, they would need a thousand days to dispel the seal.

To continue working when you only progress 1 millimetre per day——it's work where you would be unable to bear it before reaching the end, even if you brought along an ascetic monk from India or thereabouts.

"If you raised your daily pace……"

"We needed to shave it down ten thousand times to excavate half my height's worth though?
Faeries are able to absorb mana from our surroundings so we could somehow manage that much, but normally one's mana would run out before then."

If 3 seconds are needed every time, that would be 30, 000 seconds = 500 minutes = 8.3 hours.

Indeed, it's close to the limit of what one can do in a day.
No, it has completely surpassed the limit.
A sane human wouldn't be able to devote themselves to chipping off crystal shavings nonstop for 8 hours a day.

Moreover, the crystal returns to 99% of how it was before, the very next day.

That would drive anyone crazy.

Furthermore, the worker would need to have over 10, 000 MP, or have high mana recovery like the faeries.
Such people would be on the same level as the handful of great warlocks, but there's no way that such great warlocks would waste a colossal amount of their time on this insane work.

"If you worked in shifts……"

"I don't know how it works, but the regeneration speeds up when several people's mana is mixed together."

So in regards to the crystal being shaved down, only one person can do it at a time.

"By the way, what's the longest record so far?"

"……7 months.
It was an ascetic elf monk who possessed a vast mana pool because they carried the divine protection of the god of magic, Attiera.
I think it was because they were continuously doing simple work, but one day they injured their finger with one of the shavings.
The injury itself was just a common cut, but I suppose everything just piled up.
Spurred on by that, they started rampaging with a strange cry.
The hamlet was full of faeries back then so we were able to cure their frenzied state, but when they recovered their sanity, that ascetic monk left on a journey, saying they were going to start from scratch……"

That was a pity.

“That’s why, by no means should you try to dispel Master’s seal either. To have someone be driven insane for her own sake, Master wouldn’t be pleased. Even though I very much wish to see Master, ——”

“——Well, just let me give it a try for now.”

“I can’t ask a stranger to do such a thing……or rather, you’re actually doing it!? Y-you, haven’t you been listening to what I’ve been saying?”

I promptly began work.
I hit and chip away at the crystal using the chisel Melby gave me.
The crystal is whittled away along with the snapping sound of splitting ice.
The thickness was the same as before.

To optimize the work, I search for the minimum degree of strength.
I poke it lightly. This is no good.
I strike at it with the force from my elbow to the tip. This was a success.
Reducing the force slightly, I hit it like a hammer. Yup, success.
Further reducing my strength, I hit it as though I was knocking on a door. Failure.
I strengthen the knock. Success.
Well then, let’s work with this degree of power.

Next, I investigate the interval between hits.
Hit, separate, immediately hit again. Failure.
Hit, separate, hit after 5 seconds. Success.
Hit, separate, hit after 3 seconds. Success.
Hit, separate, hit after 1 seconds. Failure.
Hit, separate, hit after 2 seconds. Success.
Hit, separate, hit after 1.5 seconds. Success.
Hit, separate, hit after 1.2 seconds. Failure.
Hit, separate, hit after 1.4 seconds. Success.
Hit, separate, hit after 1.3 seconds. Failure.
In conclusion, I should hit it with a 1.4 second (estimated) interval as a rule.

Now that I know that, the task is simple.

Using the chisel, I strike the crystal with a 1.4 second interval and the force of a strong knock.
Snap, snap, snap……I chip away at the crystal with a set rhythm.

“Y-you……?”

Melby watches me work in astonishment.

Even after that, I swing the chisel countless times.

Before I knew it, the shaved fragments had piled up into a mound on the floor of the cavern.

Hm? Melby is gone.

Or so I thought, but Melby comes tottering back from the entrance with a heavy-looking tea set in her hands.

“Don’t strain yourself too much, okay? It’s already been 3 hours!”

Speaking of which, the hand holding the chisel is a little bit sore.

There’s no fatigue, but though it may be small, there is still the burden of the recoil from when I’m striking the crystal.

“Let me have a look. ——Oh spirit of life who dwells in children, wield your power and invigorate this child’s body.”

Following Melby’s words, my arm is shrouded in a pale radiance and the pain in my arm vanishes.

“Ohh!”

“This is [Spirit Magic]. Just then, I called upon the spirit of life that was dwelling inside your body to aid your recovery.”

“Can I learn it too?”

“It’s a little difficult for humans, but it’s not impossible. You have to listen carefully to the voices of the spirits that lurk among everything in nature. Once you can hear their voices, you’ll naturally grasp how to make requests.”

“Listen…… to the voices of the spirits?”

“There’s no other way to explain this. Believe in the existence of spirits, hone your soul and just try listening to their voices earnestly. Faeries are able to do it naturally from the moment they are born, but I suppose humans need to train for several hours a day, and finally get it after a few years have passed.”

Oh. It seems quite useful, I’ll try it next time.
As expected, one might give up if they need to spend years on it, but with my powers of concentration, I could continue to try to listen to the spirits’ voices at night, when my concentration is at its highest.

After drinking the tea that Melby brewed for me, I pick up the chisel once again.

“A-are you alright……?”

Melby asks, seemingly worried.

“Yeah. I’m going to try for a little bit longer. You said the regeneration would slow down once it reaches half your height’s worth, and I want to see.”

Snap, snap, snap……
I return to the never-ending work of chipping away at the barrier once more.
I have accustomed myself with this simple work, and I swing the chisel with the perfect timing and an exquisite moderation of power.
It would be troublesome if my arm gets sore, so I move the shavings aside when they pile up at my feet as a form of rest, and then continue to swing the chisel endlessly.

I wonder how much time has passed since then.

“……ent, I said wait a moment!”

Melby says, cutting in front of me.

“Woah! Don’t startle me.”

“You shouldn’t be saying ‘don’t startle me’! Just how long do you intend to do this for!”

“……Indeed, I’ve almost excavated half of Melby’s height.”

By the time I realised, I have shaved down roughly 10 centimetres since I started.

After looking on for a moment, the crystal glows dimly and the shaved section recovers.

…..It appears to be almost a complete recovery, but……

“We’ve properly measured with a ruler before so it’s alright. With this, it has decreased in thickness by one sliver.”

“I see… So now it has finally been 1 set.”

If the thickness of the crystal is 1 metre, I have finally made 1 millimetre of progress.
If I repeat this work for a thousand times, this crystal will have been exhausted.

Come to think of it, how much time has passed?

“……Are you really saying that? You’ve been doing this for half a day already!”

“Eh, seriously?”

The knocking, snapping rhythm had been so pleasant that I completely forgot the time.

The knock-and-snap took 1.5 seconds and the standby time was 1.4 seconds, so one swing

of the chisel took roughly 3 seconds.
According to my previous calculation, it would take 8.3 hours to strike the crystal ten thousand times.

If I were to do this for 24 hours, I would be swing the chisel 28, 800 times.
Nevertheless, this was just a theoretical value at best.
Even for me, taking time to eat and rest my hand is necessary, so swinging it 25 thousand times in a day was probably the limit.

Time runs 10 times faster inside the faery hamlet, so if I spend a whole outside day on this work, I reckon I could shave the crystal 250 thousand times — 25 millimetres = 2.5 centimetres.
I would have to do this until I reached 1 metre, so if I maintained this for 40 outside days, I would be able to whittle down the crystal.

This is quite the story of patience, but it doesn't seem impossible to do it.
For example, if I come to the faery hamlet once a month, it would take an estimated 40 months——3 years and 4 months to release the seal.

"However, that's the most troubling part."

It's hard to slip out of the house for a full day in the body of an infant.
In addition, I wouldn't be able to go very far away from the entrance of the faery hamlet in those 40 months.

And yet I'll be heading to the royal capital with my parents after this, so it would be too excessive to do then.
It'll still be difficult after we finish our business at the royal capital and return to our residence.
It takes half a day to reach the village nearest to the faery hamlet, Riverette village, from Corbette village, where the estate is, so I can't slip out at midnight and come here.

Of course, there is also the option of explaining the situation to my parents and obtaining permission from them, but then I would have to mention my reincarnation.

"……You'll help……?"

Melby says anxiously.

"Eh? Of course I intend to do so."

I felt like asking what she was going on about now, after such a long time, but she did say that the previous helpers had been driven mad, so Melby is sure to be uneasy.

I smiled as tenderly as possible and said,

"——You wished for someone to help, didn't you?"

"——!"

Melby remarked that it was fine not to help.

However, Melby's actions had betrayed her.

If she didn't want help, why would she leave a secret message in a conspicuous place near the village?
Why did she encourage me, who came to visit the village, to stay overnight?
Why did she say to take a good look around the hamlet?
And—— why did she leave open the entrance of the stairs leading to this cavern?

I think Melby held some aspiration deep in her heart.
That I would discover this place and say that I would save their "Master".

There was a sob.
I tried to not look that way as much as possible.

"……But I have some difficulties. As you can see, I am just a child so I can't leave my parents' side for long. I also have other things to do and can't spend all my time and energy on this separation barrier."

If I could rescue this "Master" — Alfecia, according to [Appraisal] — there probably wouldn't be anyone as reliable in the fight against the evil god.
Or rather, she's at the level where I could just leave the later matters entirely to her.

But there's the "Evil Warlock" who imprisoned this person inside the separation barrier, huh.
If I ever meet him, I will have no choice but to flee with all my power.
He's a figure from a thousand years ago so I suppose he had already died long ago, but……

"——In that case, I'll just follow you."

"Eh, Melby will?"

"I can also use [Dimension Magic], although it's not at the same level as Master's. But then, I could make a gate to this hamlet no matter where you are."

I see. In that case, I could use my free time to come here.

"D-don't be mistaken! The reason I'm following you is all for Master's sake, okay!"

"Yes, yes."

Making a wry smile at her attempt to hide her embarrassment, I pick up the crystal shavings that had piled into a heap on the ground.
Each one was the size of a smartphone, had a thickness of 1 millimetre, and had an outrageously sharp edge; if one wasn't careful, they could cut their finger.

“I can use this.”

I pinched it between my index and middle finger and threw it at the wall.
The shaving easily pierced the wall.
I think that [Shuriken Techniques] is probably showing effect, but I suppose this is considered part of the shuriken category.

“Ah, so you can use that. In that case, just take them with you because they’re also a trouble to throw away.”

As Melby was saying that carelessly, she stored the pile of shavings somewhere.

“Just then, what did you do?”

“This? It’s a form of [Dimension Magic], magic known as dimension storage.”

Inventory (Infinite Storage) has arrived!

“That, can I use it too?”

“I wonder… [Dimension Magic] itself is a very high-level skill, so it might be possible if you practiced for tens of years perhaps.”

Tens of years, huh.
I believe I could condense that if I use [No Fatigue] well, but to learn it instantly may be unreasonable.

“Now that that’s decided, let’s go.”

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

——Like this, Melby ended up accompanying me.

I didn’t think that Melby would show her figure outside, but it seems faeries can’t be seen by humans on the whole.

Because we will be travelling together, I asked Melby to let me see her status in advance.
Ta-da.

《Melby (Born in Tetelutia Faery Hamlet | Leader of Faeries |《Sage》|《Miss Perseverance》|《Everybody’s Big Sister》)
?? (1119 years have passed since birth)
Faery

Level 44
HP 34/34
MP 997/997

Status: Faeries’ Oath (Cannot tell a lie intentionally. Excluding desperate situations of self-

defence, cannot cause harm to others. However, those under the influence of the evil god are an exception.)

Skills
• Legendary Class
[Telepathic Communication] 5
[Spirit Magic] 4
[Dimension Magic] 2
[Appraisal] 4
[Faery's Eye] 4
[Dimensional Magical Tool Creation] 2

• Master class
[Leadership] 3
[Magical Tool Creation] 9 (MAX)
[Space Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Faery's Song] 4
[Mana Control] 9 (MAX)

• General
[Command] 9 (MAX)
[Tool Creation] 9 (MAX)
[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Mana Perception] 6

《Pioneer Elf's Blessing》(Able to borrow a portion of the Pioneer Elf's knowledge. Small compensation to mana increase when levelling up, small compensation for magic skills' learning | growth.)》

Yeah. Melby really is someone who perseveres.
She handed it to me nonchalantly, but I can tell from her status that she probably went through considerable hardship to make that dimension chisel.

Since it's there, let's use [Appraisal] on the dimension chisel too.

《Dimension Chisel: A legendary-class magic tool. An anti-separation barrier chisel produced by the faery Melby of Tetelutia after diligently studying for hundreds of years. Increases the shaved depth of the separation barrier from 1 micrometre thickness to 1 millimetre thickness.》

It wasn't at the level of hardship!
It's the fruits of her blood, sweat, and tears!
I'm sorry for thinking "so it only shaves 1 millimetre…" in my heart!

23. The Search for Boyce-kun (Firebird)

Melby's preparations for the journey finished in no time.
She doesn't need any food since she lives by absorbing mana from the atmosphere, and she doesn't have many belongings either.
In addition to that, not only does she have a Dimensional Stash, but also if it comes to that she can return to the Fairy Village with [Dimension Magic] anytime, so this is not really any different from a simple outing.

On the way back we jumped straight to the vicinity of Riverette Village with Melby's [Dimension Magic].
It's awfully convenient, but to be able to move with [Dimension Magic], first Melby has to leave a Gate in this world.
Even if I say it's a Gate, it's apparently an invisible mana marker of sorts.

Also, moving from Gate to Gate, in other words, from somewhere in this world to somewhere else in this world is not possible.
You can only jump from this world back to Fairy Village, then from Fairy Village back to this world, and also, when returning (when moving from Fairy Village to this world), you can only use the same Gate you used to arrive.

For example, if you leave a Gate at the outskirts of Riverette Village and use that to jump to the Fairy Village, then you can only go back through the Riverette Village Gate (although you can leave through the「Exit」of Fairy Village which leads to the limestone cave behind the waterfall).
Therefore, moving to a different place via Fairy Village like Riverette Village → Fairy Village → A different Gate is not possible.

Well, even then it's an awfully convenient magic.

By the way, my appearance returned to its former 3 years-old-like state (the contents being barely 8-month-old).

"…..Ed, you really were a child, huh."

A bit more familiarly acting Melby's eyes grew round with surprise.

When I was just thinking that the way she displayed her surprise is a bit too weak,

"Well, if you live for a thousand years you get to see all kinds of people.", she said.

"Also, Master is about a thousand times more amazing than you."

Mm, well, after seeing that Status I can't really deny it.

As it was dawning in the village, I walked in a way so people wouldn't notice me, and tried to get back to the village chief's house.

“——Don’t move!”

Suddenly, someone called out to me from behind.

I turned back with unease.

I knew from her voice, but there was Julia-kaasan with a grim expression on her face.

“Get away from Edgar-kun!”

“Huh……?”

Mom said that while glaring at Melby—— the fairy flying near my shoulders.

She can see her!?

When she saw Melby, she hurriedly put on an intense expression.

“When I suddenly woke up at dawn, Edgar-kun was nowhere to be seen. I thought maybe I was overthinking it, but there was that missing person’s case, so I woke up the village chief and had him put together a search party. ——But, I’m glad the culprit was found before that.”

“Please wait, Mom! Melby is not at fault here!”

“…..really?”

“Really! I’ve become friends with her!”

Mom is inspecting both of us with a still very doubting expression.

“I don’t know if you will believe me, but it’s true.”

Melby said this to her.

Maybe they heard mom’s voice, but the villagers started gathering and surrounding us at a distance.
The villagers are holding spades, sickles, and hoes in their hands.

“I heard from Ed that there is an ongoing missing child’s case in this village. It was a coincidence that our Fairy Circle was found near the scene of the crime. In the first place, fairies can’t harm people.”

The villagers start talking among themselves after hearing Melby’s words.
Since the villagers can see her, that means Melby decided to show herself, it seems.
Since I could see her from the beginning I don’t know when she did it.

“Is that true….?” “Of course it’s a lie” “But, they say fairies can’t lie” “Maybe that’s also a lie” ……

The villagers reaction was filled with doubt.
There are no concepts in this world such as a scientific investigation or innocent until proven guilty, huh.

Moreover, there some said,

"——Fairies are servants of the devil! Fairies came to eat us!"

A middle-aged fellow with an unkempt beard and red face yelled with a hand-axe in one of his hands.
This one is probably the woodcutter from the spokesperson's story.

"We can also hide our appearance. ——Like this."

Apparently Melby hid her appearance for a moment.
The villagers are stirring.

"However, as you can see I'm showing myself. If we really abducted the child, then I wouldn't do such a thing."

The villagers were looking at each other after hearing Melby's words.

It seems she was somewhat convincing, but they are still doubting her.

"——Melby-oneechan!"

Suddenly a voice cut in.

Rushing out from the row of villagers was a familiar little girl.

Weell, she's that one. The one that defended the fairies in the village chief's house.
Her name was….. yes, Aino-chan.

"Oh, you are….."

"It's Aino! When I got lost before Big Sister saved me!"

"Right, that's how it was. You got bigger since I last saw you."

Melby flew over to near Aino-chan's head and affectionately patted her head.

Her appearance was like a big sister pampering her younger sister.

Huh, it looks like Melby has a Big Sister personality even outside the Fairy Village.

Seeing how Melby and Aino-chan looked at that time the villagers lowered the spades, sickles, and hoes they were holding.

"Hoy! Don't be deceived by the words of the fairy! Fairies are the servants of the devil, that

must be it!”

The woodcutter is shouting with a red face, but

“….it’s more dangerous to believe the things *you* say.”

Saying that, the spokesperson appeared from within the group of villagers.

“Hello there, cute Fairy-san. Welcome to Riverette Village.”

“Ah, no, well…. saying that I’m cute…..”

“He is just being diplomatic.”

For the time being I make a remark to the hands-on-her-face-squirming Melby.

“So, Fairy-dono. What business might you have in this village? I’m sorry, but this village has a somewhat frenzied atmosphere currently, you see.”

“Ed deciphered the code we left behind and came to play to the Fairy Village, so I came to escort him back.”

Ah, I would’ve liked if you didn’t tell them that.
Although, there is no helping it since Melby can’t tell a lie.

“Is that true? That kid is not even 3 years old.”

“Huh? But, the Divine Blessing——mmmm!”

I put my hands on Melby’s mouth, who was letting things slip one after the other.

“(Wh-what?)”

“(Don’t speak about my Status, please.)”

“(You are asking me some difficult things…. Got it. I will keep it in mind.)”

As Melby and I was speaking in a hush-hush,

“Melby-oneechan! Boyce-kun disappeared……”

“A friend of yours?”

“Nn. Boyce-kun. He said he will give me a beautiful stone for my birthday and went to the river….”

“……I see.”

Melby nodded to the depressed looking Aino-chan with a grim expression.
Then,

“Village chief”

“Nah, I’m not the village chief, you know? I’m just the village’s spokesperson.”

“I don’t care which. I will also help with the search for that Boyce-kun.”

“That would a great help, but…. is that alright?”

“It’s the perfect chance to lift everyone’s doubts….. and also, fairies are the allies of children. But, before that……”

Of all the places, Melby started flying to that woodcutter.

“——Woodcutter-san”

“Do-don’t come near me! You wicked fairy!”

“——You, you are possessed by something?”

“Wh-, what……..?”

“Lalala…….♪”

Suddenly Melby closed her eyes and started singing.

That singing continued on for about a minute.

Sweet and gentle, it was a singing that warms people’s hearts.

The woodcutter started staggering, then he leaned against the wall of a nearby private house….. did he fall asleep?

“Wh-, what was that about?”

The spokesperson asked.

“This was a [Fairy’s Song] that has the effect of calming people’s hearts. It caught my eye since the beginning, but it seems this woodcutter-san was under a spell that affects the mind. Thankfully, it wasn’t that strong of a spell, so I managed to cancel it with the《Song of Tranquility》…..”

“What the-!”

Maybe it’s the effect of the song, but it seems Melby’s words were easily accepted by the villagers.

“Wait a moment.”

Saying that, Melby returned to the outskirts of the village.
She must be going where the Gate is.

After a few minutes of waiting——

“Sorry for the wait.”

“””””Sorry for the wait~!”””””

Melby came back with a few other fairies.
Every one of them is someone I met at yesterday’s party.
The twin fairies——Secel and Secela is also here.

“We will search the forest by us fairies. We will start with the upstream part of the river, so can I ask the people of the village to take care of the downstream part?”

“Yea-, yeah….of course.”

The spokesperson nodded with a dumbfounded expression.
Even if Riverette Village is near the Fairy Village, it’s the first time they saw such a gathering of fairies.

“Then, that’s how it is. Let’s start!”

Perhaps it’s the effect of the [Leadership] skill, she said that as she took charge of things before anyone noticed.

| TOC |

24. Rescue

A man clad in black mutters as he examines the faces of each of the rope-bound children, one by one.

"……Hm. Now then, is this it?"

The one who answered was another man, dressed entirely in black.

"They don't have any particularly outstanding talents, but this should be enough for the harvest."

For convenience, let's call the former Black-Garb A, and the latter Black-Garb B.
The two of them wore masks to hide their lower faces and their bodies were covered in black overcoats.

Their eyes were sharp and each movement was deft; one could easily infer that they had undergone some form of special training.

Black-Garb A & B were inside a gloomy cave.
Light shone in from the entrance, but the interior, where the children were imprisoned, was quite dark.

"Well then, should we move out soon……?"

"I suppose so. It's one thing if there are children of value here but it can't be helped if there aren't any."

"……I only heard rumours of one person."

"Rumours?"

Black-Garb B asked in response.

"Yeah.《Baby Scarlet》——apparently there's a baby coined as thus."

"Are you saying a baby possesses a title?"

"Who knows, I don't know the details, but…… at any rate, he fought at Ranzrack Fortress and brought down the leader of <Black Wolf Fang>, Goleth of the throwing spear, by himself or something."

Black B raises his eyebrows in question.

"A baby did……huh?"

"It's pure rumour. However, I did hear it from the survivors of <Black Wolf Fang> so it doesn't necessarily seem like a joke."

"……It's such a groundless rumour that I feel more inclined to believe it…"

"If a baby proficient in magic exists, he might have been able to make one attack against the mercenaries at least.
Still, defeating that Goleth is probably too exaggerated of a rumour."

"That baby, how old is he?"

"He has yet to reach one year of age."

"……Huh?"

"Apparently he's the fourth son of the fortress's defence leader, Viscount Chrebl.
However, the aforementioned child should only have been born at the beginning of this year.
In other words, he isn't even a year old yet."

"You're not confusing him with one of the older children, are you?"

"Viscount Chrebl had 3 children with his former wife, but every one of them is already of age. Even the third son is 16. There shouldn't be any mistake."

By the way, the age of adulthood in this world is 15 years old.

"……He's too young."

"Indeed. Hypothetically, even if he had the aptitude for magic, his body wouldn't be able to handle it at that age.
This is why it doesn't make sense.
Consequently, I've decided to verify the target with my own eyes this time."

"……Hold on, it does indeed seem ridiculous but……"

"I understand your feelings, but events that appear to be nothing but absurd do occur in the 『Underground』of this world from time to time.
Even when Goleth first appeared, everyone said that it was ridiculous.
……Well, anyway, we're vacating this place.
It would be utterly pitiful if we were discovered now."

"Iz'zat so? The manipulation of information in the villages is flawless.
Those ignorant villagers should be under the impression that the faeries are all to blame for the disappearing children.
How stupid…… When there's no way beings such as faeries even exist."

"The lord governing those villages isn't an idiot.
I'm talking about the Viscount Chrebl who drove away the <Black Wolf Fang> at Ranzrack.
Moreover, faeries do exist. I've seen them before when I was little.
Although I haven't seen them at all recently."

“So they can’t be seen by evildoers? How is that…..”

Black B says doubtfully and stands up.
And then he turns to the shoulder of his comrade standing guard at the cave entrance and calls out.

“——Hey, we’re going.
Help us with the preparations.
……Oi, what happened?”

At Black-Garb B’s voice, the watchman’s shoulder shook.

——No, the man’s shoulder slanted, shaking violently——and just like that, the man collapsed in the entrance.

Imbedded in his forehead was a dimly shining, crystal-like, card-shaped object.

“——!? Who!?”

Black-clad A astutely questioned the identity of the stranger.

However, we had no reason to answer.

“ルト——《Flame lance》!”
“ルト——《Flame lance》!”

The ones lurking at the cave entrance, *Julia-kaasan and I*, fired《Flame lance》with a cross-like trajectory from either side of the entrance.

“Guoh!?”
“Guaah!!”

We held back a bit because of the children there, but there was enough force to render the black-clad duo helpless.
My《Flame lance》was aimed at Black-Garb B, while Mum’s《Flame lance》knocked down Black-Garb A.

Casting a backward glance at Julia-kaasan who was efficiently tying up the black-clad men, I head in the direction of the children.

“——We’re rescuing you now.”

Using the Separation Barrier shard as a knife, I cut through the ropes binding the children.

One, two, three….. So there’s a total of seven people.

Boyce-kun from Riverette Village should likely be among them, but now that I think of it, I don’t know Boyce-kun’s characteristics.
Judging from the black-clad guys’ conversation, the other children have probably been

abducted from the other neighbouring villages, with Riverette Village being the exception.

It's understandable, but everyone appears frightened.

"……Melby."

"Understood. You want me to calm them with my song, right?"

Melby, who was invisible, showed herself to the children.

Some of children looked at Melby in surprise but the others had vacant eyes and didn't react.

"La la la……♪"

While Melby was soothing the children with her song,

"Edgar-kun, can you deal with one of them?"

Julia-kaasan asks.

Of course, it's about the black-clad men.

Having gags forced in their mouths on top of having their whole bodies bound and wrapped up, the two black-clad men glare at Julia-kaasan and me in turn.

As I write ♭ in the air,

"I can handle them both,"

I answer.

When I casually raise Black A and B up with [Physics Magic], the black-clad men open their eyes wide in surprise.

"Mum, take care of the children."

"Yeah, that's right."

Mum went to cheer up the children who had regained their composure after Melby's song.

——We found out about this cave just past noon on the day I returned to the village with Melby.

The search of the faeries, who were well accustomed to the topography of the area, was precise. On the other side of the mountain, they discovered some suspicious men in a cave atop a steep cliff that the villagers didn't dare approach.
They were certain, due to the children inside.

Furthermore, apparently faeries “can’t be seen by bad people” so there was no fear of being sensed by the men.
If the villagers had gone to hunt in the forest, the men might have suspected something and run away.

Anyhow, Julia-kaasan decided to go rescue the children after receiving the information.

I offered my help.

I thought she would refuse, but Mum readily consented to my proposal unexpectedly.
To Mum, I am both her own child as well as her disciple, and it seems that it is natural for a disciple to help their master.

And so, Julia-kaasan and I headed to the cave where the men were——with no trouble, we secured the black-clad men and succeeded at rescuing the children.

The cave was in a location that would take 2 hours to reach from the village even with an adult’s gait, so the return trip while cheering up the worn out children was a hassle.

It was possible to transport everyone with [Physics Magic] if I felt inclined to, but doing that would cause an uproar so I restrained myself.

Then again, Black-Garb A and B were being transported via [Physics Magic] so it really wouldn’t make that great a difference anyway……
By the way, it was inevitable that maintaining [Physics Magic] the entire time would consume MP, but I threw them once and reduced their momentum when they land while lowering them to the ground (dropping them), before throwing them once again; this was quite a rough way of transporting them but with these guys’ crimes, no one reprimanded me.

Ah, as you might expect, I requested and had Melby cure just the burns from《Flame Lance》.
The two “evildoers” who couldn’t see faeries seemed to have been spooked out though.

Thus, I harboured slight feelings of guilt for not carrying the children, but the children walked without much complaint thanks to Julia-kaasan and Melby’s efforts.

The subordinate(?) faeries that Melby had summoned also encouraged the children by singing and dancing.

Melby can use [Spirit Magic] so she would immediately fly over and heal the children if anyone got injured.

Before I knew it, Melby started being called “Big Sister” not only from the faeries, but also from the children.

And then, when the children learned a few of the faeries’ songs, we finally managed to reach Riverette Village.

“——Boyce-kun!”

“Aino-chan!”

As we arrived at the village, Aino-chan, who had been tired of waiting, came rushing over.

And——Oh, so you’re Boyce-kun.

In contrast with the lively and adorable Aino-chan, Boyce-kun seemed quiet.

Somehow, I felt like future Boyce-kun would be henpecked.

The spokesman and Boyce-kun’s father (Bolbo-san, I think) and his wife bowed their heads to Mum many times.

Beside them, Aino-chan lead Boyce-kun and came before Melby, and they also bowed many times.
I think she’s around five years old, but she’s a considerably mature girl.

The remaining six children ended up being looked after by Riverette Village’s village chief and the spokesman for the time being.
Of course, it was only “for the time being” so we sent people to the neighbouring villages to convey that we are sheltering the missing children, and have people come to claim them.

They should have been uneasy being separated from their parents but thanks to the faeries, the children seem to currently be having fun instead.
It might not be good for their parents who, I expect, are worried but it’s better than them crying as they wait.

The black-clad men have been bound tightly and locked up so they can’t escape.
There are lots of things I’d like to ask but I can’t go interrogating them on my own accord.
Dad’s subordinate knight should be coming from Corbette Village so we will be handing them over to him.

Well, I have [Appraisal] so the black clad men’s statuses were in plain sight.
I also found out quite a lot but…… I’ll compile that information later.

——Like this, although a few mysteries remain, the case of the missing children which occurred in Riverette Village (and the neighbouring villages) has been resolved.

| TOC |

25. Maid-san grumbles (Firebird)

——The next morning.

“Kyaaaa-!”

Because of the sudden scream, Julia-kaasan jumped up and rushed out of the room in a hurry.

I also run after her hurriedly.

When I caught up with my uncertain *totetote* footsteps, mom was standing in front of a certain room.

——Yes, it’s the room where the men in black were locked in.

Mom and the servant of the village chief’s house were standing in front of the room.

When I tried to take a look inside,

“You mustn’t look Edgar-kun! ….well, even if I say this now”

Mom moved to the side and let me look inside.

Inside, the two men in black were dead on the floor, with blood flowing from their mouths.

“When I took off the muzzles from their mouths, suddenly…..”

The pale-faced servant said.

“…….poison, perhaps. Most likely it was hidden in their molars or something like that. This trick is frequently used by professional assassins.”

As expected of a former adventurer, mom is very calm.

Just to be sure, I try using [Appraise] on them.

《 Corpse〔of Ranzack〕. Cause of death: Poison (Tajicalis).》

《 Corpse〔of Elope〕. Cause of death: Poison (Tajicalis).》

“…..tajicalis?”

Mom caught what I unintentionally said out loud.

“Certainly, judging from its immediate effectiveness it could be tajicalis, but…… Edgar-kun, where did you learn about poisons?”

“Uhm, ah…… well, in the study.”

“…..hmm, where there any books on poisons there?”

Mom tilts her head.

That was when the village chief arrived.

After the village chief took a good look at the situation in the room, he deeply lowered his head towards mom.

“I am terribly sorry. To think we would simply let the perpetrators die…..”

“It can’t be helped. If you didn’t give them any food then that would certainly lead to their deaths anyway.”

As I was listening to the two of them talk without paying much attention, I recalled the [Appraise] results of the two from the day before from the [Database].

《Ranzack〈Yatagarasu〉Fifth Squad, Squad Leader）

Level 29
HP 35/54
MP 19/21

Skills
・Master class
[Discern] 2

・General
[Assassination Techniques] 7
[Knife-throwing] 5
[Dagger Skills] 5
[Stealthy Steps] 5
[Martial Arts] 4
[Shuriken Techniques] 4
[Command] 4
[Keen Hearing] 4
[Bow Skills] 3
[Sword Skills] 3
[Jump] 2
[Farsight] 2
[Darkness Magic] 2
[Fire Magic] 2
》

《Elope (Yatagarasu) Fifth Squad, Member)

Level 23
HP 21/44

MP 13/13

Skills
・General
[Knife-throwing] 5
[Martial Arts] 4
[Assassination Techniques] 4
[Dagger Skills] 4
[Shuriken Techniques] 3
[Sword Skills] 3
[Keen Hearing] 3
[Stealthy Steps] 3
[Throwing-axe Skills] 2
[Jump] 1
[Farsight] 1
[Pharmacist] 1
》

〈Yatagarasu〉.
The religious assassin organization with ties to the <Black Wolf Fang> that dad mentioned.
He said that lately, now that the civil war in Sonorato ended, they started to flow into Santamana.

Why are they abducting people in a place like this?
The answer to that was not found in the end.

All night last night, I looked back at the sequence of events that happened and realized something very important.
And that is,

——There is at least 1 person missing that should be here.

and that's the problem.

Let's look back at the incident starting from its beginnings.

First, the men in black kidnap Boyce-kun from Riverette Village and the others.

Next, one of the men in black disguises himself as a traveler, stops by the village and spreads the rumor of fairies kidnapping children.
This is probably a planned diversionary tactic.

However, the men in black also carried out an unplanned diversion.
The case where the woodcutter of Riverette Village was put under a spell.

Most likely, the woodcutter came across the men in black in the forest.
Perhaps he saw them as they kidnapped a child, or maybe he found the hiding place (cave) of the men in black, but one thing's for sure, he saw something that would be disastrous for

them.

That being said if they killed the woodcutter it could've become an uproar.
If not just a kid, but even a woodcutter, who should be familiar with the forest, disappears, then the simple missing person case gets much more complicated.
That's why, one of the men in black put a spell on the woodcutter and sent him back, and as a bonus made him claim that is was「the work of fairies」.

This diversion was most likely an unplanned accident.
But, as a precaution against such accidents, they stationed a person in the hideout who could use magic that influences the mind. Probably something like that.

That one person is nowhere to be seen.

The two who killed themselves (Ranzack and Elope) did not have any skills that they could've used to put a spell on the woodcutter.
I already confirmed it with Melby, the [Darkness Magic] does not have any skills like that.
They say, to influence the mind of a higher class animal such as a human, quite a high level of magic skills are needed.

The men in black that were guarding their hiding place, I confirmed it with [Appraise] before killing them, had mostly the same Status as Elope.

Also, about the「traveler」that stopped by the village, we confirmed it with the innkeeper that neither of the two men in black who committed suicide was him.
There is a chance that one of the men in black guards at the hiding place was the one, but there is a strong possibility that the mage =「traveler」.

Therefore, there has to be at least one more person.
If the mage and the traveler are different people then 2 people.
That means we let an associate of the men in black escape.

No, if we are talking possibilities, then it's still possible that they had even more associates that didn't stop by the village and weren't at the cave at that time.

If that's the case, then it really hurts that we couldn't get any information out of the men in black about that.

Maybe I should've interrogated them myself, even if it would've been unreasonable.
No, even if I was the one asking the questions I would have taken off their muzzles.
If it was me I would've prevented them from killing themselves…. is something I can't really claim.

Although it ended with an undesired outcome, but now that there are no men in black here, Julia-kaasan doesn't need to stay here anymore.
She decided to leave the rest to the village chief and the spokesperson, and head towards Trenadette Village (Third Village).
And since there were a few kids among the ones that were rescued who are from

Trenadette Village, taking the opportunity we brought them with us.

The fairies that helped with soothing the children, accompanied by the gratitude of the villagers, returned to the Fairy Village in the course of the morning.
Aside from Melby, apparently the other fairies can't really spend too much time away from the Fairy Village.

Then, we traveled for a day after leaving Riverette Village.
We reached Trenadette Village around the time the sun set.

My personal maid, Steph, is apparently the daughter of the chief of this village.
Our party was heading towards the house of the village chief led by Steph.

On the way, there was a scene where the parents of children we brought with us rushed over and hugged their children tightly.
The children were understandably still scared, so they clung to their parents, weeping.

When the touching reunion ended, we decided to have them accompany us to the village chief's house for the time being to report what happened.

"Well well, thank you for coming, madam. I hear you even rescued the children, so we really can't thank you enough."

The village chief is an about 40 years-old looking merchant-like man.
This is the first time I saw someone rub his hands together like that in real life.

"——Father!"

Steph said.

"Hey, Steph. You are someone serving the House of Viscount Chrebl. Mind the place."

"Okaay—….."

After getting rebuked in a soft tone, Steph looked like she started sulking a bit.

"Madam, is our Stephanie being helpful?"

"Yes, of course. She is doing well as the observer….no, not that, as the personal maid for Edgar-kun."

She said observer just now, didn't she!?

"Hou….the young master's. It's an honor to be entrusted with such an important duty, right Steph?"

"Eh, yesh! Tha-that's right!"

Steph responds in a hurry.

It’s a job where she is looking over me half asleep as I’m reading books or raising my skills, but we can call it an important duty.

“In any case, you must be tired from today. You must be planning to depart for Fauno City as soon as possible, but please spend the night here comfortably.”

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

At night——

I don’t think I need to say it after all this time, but I don’t need to sleep.
That being said, I can’t really do magic practice in other people’s house, so the only thing I can do is probably max MP expansion.
Since Melby is also sleeping at night I don’t even have a talking partner, so I just keep silently repeating the routine of floating everything that I can see with [Physical Magic] and cancelling it.

That’s why I was able to notice the small voices from further inside the house.

When I strained my ears I noticed that apparently the ones talking are Steph and the village chief.

I’m not the kind to eavesdrop on a conversation between parent and child, so I kept working hard on the「exercise」, but after a certain moment, suddenly I could hear everything clearer and clearer.

I thought maybe, so used [Appraise] on myself.

《Edgar Chrebl

Level 31
HP 63/63
MP 2092/2092 (181↑)

Skills
・Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

・Legendary class
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –

・Master class
[Physical Magic] 8 (1↑)
[Enchant Magic] 3
[Mana Control] 6
[Letterless Invocation] 6

[Magic Language] 1 (NEW!)

・General
[Throwing Spear Techniques] 5
[Flying Sword Techniques] 2
[Shuriken Techniques] 4 (1↑)
[Throwing Axe Techniques] 2
[Knife Throwing] 2
[Fire Magic] 7 (1↑)
[Water Magic] 2
[Wind Magic] 6
[Earth Magic] 2
[Light Magic] 3 (1↑)
[Telekinesis Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Simultaneous Invocation] 9 (MAX)
[Mana Perception] 1 (NEW!)
[Cryptanalysis] 2 (NEW!)
[Keen Hearing] 1 (NEW!)

《Blessing of a Benevolent God +1》
》

The other day I thought maybe I could use [Database] to indicate the extent by which my abilities have risen, and when I tried it I could.
It's convenient so I think I will keep it this way in the future.

However, lately the number of my skills have increased so my Status started getting a bit jumbled.

Let's try having it display only the relevant information when I have some free time after this.

Let's see, I think there are few things that can be commented on, but the important one now is the one that has been added to the end of the General skills, the [Keen Hearing].
I tried to keep myself from hearing anything, but instead, it appears I got interested in it all the more.

Perhaps by confirming that the men in black had it, I become aware that there is such a skill and that led to the acquisition of the skill…. such things might be possible.

Leaving that aside, by acquiring [Keen Hearing] the voices can be heard much more clearly.

There should be a way to turn it on and off, but since I just learned this skill I don't know how.

I start hearing the conversation between Steph and the village chief.

“You said you are the babysitter for the young lord, but how is it? Is there something out of the ordinary?”

“…..rather, there are nothing but unusual things.”

Different from usual, Steph didn’t use polite language.
No, this must be the usual for her.

“What do you mean?”

“It hasn’t even been a year since he was born, so what’s up with that size?”

“But you said it was because of the level up, didn’t you? Well, the fact itself that such a young child had leveled up is out of the ordinary, but that family has a lot of geniuses. Belhart-sama, Chester-sama, and David-sama too. No, to begin with, the Madam who was an A-rank adventurer and the Lord who is a soldier with a nickname despite being young, they are easily at the level of geniuses too.”

“…..even if he started using magic half a year after being born and now can normally read and write?”

“Wha-!”

“He should still be just a baby, but he spends more than half a day secluding himself in the study, enthusiastically reading books and apparently memorizing the important parts of books about magic in particular. Then in the other half of the day he goes to the courtyard and, I don’t know what’s fun about it, but the whooole time, the whooooooooooole time, the whooooooooooooooooooole time”

“Enough of the whole time”

“Anyhow, the whole time he keeps repeating these incomprehensible things.”

“Incomprehensible things?”

“One day, for about 5 hours, he kept throwing firewood at a target with magic. The whole time.”

“Firewood….?”

“The next day it was a needle, the day after that a tree branch. After that, a sword or a spear if I remember correctly. My mind went a bit hazy midway so I don’t remember it exactly….”

“Dozing off, huh”

“Uuh. Yeah, I did, but can you blame me? 5 hours!? The whole time, the whooole time, the whooooooooooole time,”

“Enough of that already”

“Anyhow, the whole time, with a nonchalant face he keeps casually throwing things. Do you know how hard it is for me who has to keep watching over him by his side!?”

“Uh…..sounds like you can go crazy from that.”

“Even during the night, it sounds like he is creeping around with something so I have to be on guard even then. Julia-sama is *that* kind of person so she is very composed about it…..., but it’s not normal.”

“Oi, watch what you say.”

“Okaay~. But, I think that Julia-sama and Alfred-sama are also of the same opinion. Even this trip to the Capital, the goal is to report about the incident that happened at the Ranzrack Fortress, but I think having someone at the Samsara Temple take a look at young master Edgar is also one of the main objectives.”

“Hm…..”

A short silence.

“…..come to think of it, how did you turn out to be the young master’s personal maid? I find it strange that someone would leave their child in the care of a freshly hired maid.”

“That was because the young master said he prefers me.”

“Hou. And why was that?”

“I didn’t know at the time, but after I realized. It looks like the young master likes breasts.”

Pfu-!

“Because, when he is sitting in my lap he intentionally pushes his head into my breasts.”

“….are you alright, my daughter?”

“What are you worried about? He is a baby?”

Ahaha, Steph laughs.

“Mh. Then, in that case, you could use your charms——no, sorry, I asked something impossible.”

“I-could-do-it~. I could use my charms if I wanted to—!”

“Then try it.”

“Ah, aaah….uhhuun?”

“……”

Even I who wasn’t there could tell that a painful silence has descended.

“We-well, I was just joking. You and the young lord are too far apart in age.”

“Ye-yeah, that’s riight—”

The amicable(?) conversation between parent and child still continued on after that.

It sounds like Steph’s dad——the village chief of Trenadette, wants to become a direct retainer of Alfred-tousan.

That being said, it’s apparently not because he is a lump of avarice, but because he wants to let his family have a comfortable life.

It sounds like he also has a good relationship with Steph,

“If it looks like the young lord wants to do something to you, you can come home.”

he even said something like this.

…..I won’t do anything like that.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

Then, the next morning.

I started talking to Steph, who was preparing for the departure.

“Say, Steph, can you keep secrets?”

“Eh, eeh….? Why do you ask so suddenly?”

“No, just, you won’t spread rumors about me right?”

“E-, eeeeh……!? N-n-no way, why would…. ahaha…..”

“I’m glad. Hearing that, I’m now relieved. Let’s get along from now on too, Steph.”

Saying that I held my hand out, which then Steph awkwardly shook.

“——Ah, that’s right. I will properly tell dad that Steph’s dad wants to become his direct retainer so don’t worry, alright?”

From my words, Steph broke out in a cold sweat.

| TOC |

26. Dad is Peerless?

As we were preparing to leave Trenadette Village, a knight turned up at the village chief's house.
This implied that Alfred-tousan would be arriving soon.
And not even 30 minutes after that, Dad arrived.

"——Julia!"

"——Al-kun"

Mum and Dad embraced each other tightly.

It has been a little over a month since the incident at the fortress.
They're as lovey-dovey as usual.

I'm sure the room next door will be noisy tonight.
I look forward to Steph's reaction.

"Hey~ Steph. What are Mum and Dad doing?"

I want to ask such a thing.

I didn't ask though, because she would feel embarrassed every time she returned home (to the village chief's house).

——Now then, after pleasantly reuniting with Dad, we had an early breakfast at the village chief's house and then departed from Trenadette Village.

The members of the party of Viscount Chrebl's happy companions were as follows:

Alfred-tousan.
Julia-kaasan.
Me.
Steph.
And Melby.
Furthermore, there were also a few of Dad's subordinate knights.

Melby had also been introduced to Dad.

Dad, although unable to see Melby's concealed figure itself, seemed to know that there was something there.
Whether that was a trait of the Half-elf race or it stemmed from the instincts of an outstanding knight, even the person himself didn't seem to know for sure.

Mum was able to see Melby even if she concealed herself, as seen during that one incident in Riverette Village.

This was probably an effect of the [Magic Perception] skill, but it also appears to be related to her disposition as well.
According to Melby, who used [Faery's Eye] to observe Mum, she was "a person as pure as a little girl".

It seems that Steph's perception was similar to Dad; she could sense Melby there somehow.
This was because she was close to the upper limit of the usual age one can see faeries at.

By the way, if Melby were to hide seriously, I wouldn't be able to see her figure at all, nor would I know where she was.

Why is it that only I can't see her despite being the one whom Melby is following…..
I suppose I can't see faeries because of my dirty soul that is mentally 30 years old.
Won't I appear strange to Dad, Mum, and Steph for being unable to see Melby despite being the youngest?

As far as it goes, I should "normally" be able to manage to perceive Melby when she concealed her figure, so during our trip I will practice seeing faeries using [No Fatigue].

……Come to think of it, the aforementioned Black Garbs—— <Yatagarasu>'s assassins possessed a skill called [Farsight].
It would be useful if I mastered it, so let's aim to practice that too.

In my previous life, my eyesight wasn't that great because I was always gaming.
Due to that, I feel like being able to see far away is a dream.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

Being able to notice the black figures blocking the road was thanks to the [Farsight] I quickly learned.

I was the first to notice, then Melby noticed, and Dad noticed after that.

Melby was a faery so her eyes were good from the start, and apparently Dad has good eyesight as it was a trait of a Half-elf.

Dad sat in the driver's seat along with Mum, and they were discussing about the Black Garb men who had been abducting the children with serious looks on their faces.

I was about to inform Dad about the figures, but Dad gave a pointed glare at the road in front before I could, then he pulled at the reins and stopped the carriage.
At the same time, he gave an order for the subordinate knights surrounding the carriage to stop.

"Speak of the devil."

Dad mutters.

The dark figures on the road ahead were pure black, with no exaggeration.
Their bodies were covered in pitch black outfits that reminded me of ninjas, and they stood spread out along the width of the main road, blocking our route.

When they realised that our carriage had stopped, the men approached while swinging the daggers they had drawn and stopped when they were approximately 10 metres away from the carriage.

"——What do you want?" Dad asked as our representative, "We are in a hurry, despite how we may appear. It would help if you obediently make way for us."

Ignoring Dad's query, one of the black-clad men blocking the road questions.

"……How much did you learn?"

The one who replied to this was Mum.

"Now then, what might you be referring to? We won't know if you don't speak clearly——
Dear assassins from <Yatagarasu>?"

"——!!"

They emit something that could only be called bloodlust.
For a moment, I wondered how Mum could recognise them without [Appraisal] but it wasn't a very complicated.

Mum also heard the Black Garb men talking at the cave, so it wasn't strange for her to hit upon the <Yatagarasu> that was rumoured to have ties with <Black Wolf Fang>.

Rather than that, it was a leading question.

As expected from a former A-rank adventurer, she's reliable at times like these.

"……You've gotten so roused up, but I'm sorry,"

Alfred-tousan says,

"Won't you leave everything to me this time?"

Dad said as the spear in his hand gently knocked against his shoulder, making a tapping noise.

"I didn't have much of an active role at the fortress, you see.
As a husband and a father, I have to show off some of my strong points."

As he says that, Dad grins.
Unlike his usual smile which looked like a thin line, this one was a broad smile.

The escorting knights who had their respective swords and spears drawn were also ordered

to stand down by Dad as he walked straightforwardly towards the men in black.

"Any support?"

"No need."

Giving a short reply to Mum's words, Dad confronts the three men in black.

I think it should be fine because the person himself says so, but let's use [Appraisal] on the men in black.

《Borio (ボリオ): <Yatagarasu> 7th squadron member. Level: 27.》
《Lucretio (ルクレツィオ): <Yatagarasu> 7th squadron leader. Level: 33.》
《Dawson (ドースン): <Yatagarasu> 7th squadron member. Level: 21.》

Hmm.
They're a little stronger than our knight escorts.

Dad going forth might also be because he thought that the knight escorts were no match for them.
Of course, the knight escorts being protected by the subject they were escorting was like putting the cart before the horse, so it was likely that used those words in consideration of their feelings.
Dad is such a cool guy.

The skills of the men in black were very much the same as the two we fought before.
The leader (it was something like Lucretio, but I'm not inclined to remember his name at all) seemed a little more able than the Black Garb leader from the other day.

As for Dad, his level was 40 and his skills were also enriched.
All that's left is to see how Dad will handle this 3 vs 1 battle with a disadvantage in numbers.

However, to have faced us, who annihilated the black-garbed men near Riverette Village, was a little—— no, seems rather out of their depth……?

"——Julia, you understand, right?"

"Of course."

Dad and Mum whisper in small voices.

This married couple seemed share some kind of understanding, but I couldn't follow them at all.

Mum, secretly looks back at me and winks, taking care so that the men in black don't notice.

——So it's like that.

"Now, let's test your ability."

Facing Dad who had readied his spear, the men in black moved.

Despite the lack of signals or anything, the men in black parted to the front, left, and right and throw their blackened daggers at Dad at practically the same time.

——Fast!

The attack at the cave was a surprise attack so we didn't have a chance to see their abilities, but I didn't think they would be this skilled.
I might have underestimated them a little by just looking at their levels.

Dad only repelled the front knife with his spear handle and then safely dodged the remaining two.

One of the knives strayed this way so I attempt to catch it with [Physics Magic].

I use [Appraisal] on the knife which had a black lustre.

《〔Stainless Steel〕Knife. Coated with Tajicalis.》

What!?

I just used [Appraisal] on it innocently but what became apparent was a surprising piece of information.

This world has stainless steel!?

I don't have any grounding in it so I'm not too clear about it but I think stainless steel started being used on Earth after we entered the 20th century.

I can't say I'm certain about the level of the technology in this world, but judging from the quality of the metal goods I'm familiar with (such as tableware and cookware), it's hard to say it's high by any standards.

——That is to say, there might be someone who brought the knowledge of stainless steel to this world.

In my mind, I have a flashback to the scene of "that day".

The slasher who I accidentally stabbed to death had been carrying several knives.

The knife I snatched that day and the knife thrown by the man in black were obviously different articles, but it might be because the material properties are the same that I feel they are similar……

Now then, Dad's battle had started while I was preoccupied with the knife.

Dad sidestepped the men in black who came rushing in from three sides with only a single spear, and reduced the distance to the men.

And then, in the blink of an eye, he reversed the situation and put the three men at a disadvantage.

Each time Dad's spear swings pointedly, red streaks appear on the black-clad men's arms, legs, bodies, and faces.

Each one was only a shallow wound, but the three men's movements slowly but surely falter.

——Without letting his opponents get inside the spear's range, he caused a stalemate, inflicted minute wounds on the opponents and was gradually weakening them.
It might certainly be an ideal fighting method to face multiple opponents with a long weapon.

If I were to face this kind of fighting method, I would probably get irritated somehow and try to forcibly attack.
And then, I would no doubt suffer damage when the opponent, who had been waiting for a chance, took the opportunity to attack.

He looks to be a man of delicate features, but Alfred-tousan's fighting method is actually both reliable and cunning.

However, Dad's three opponents showed no signs of impatience.

……I already understood the reason for that.

The black-clad leader clicked his tongue lightly.

That was probably a signal, because the three men in black jumped back a great deal——

“”””——《Fire Ball》!”””””

Suddenly, fire magic came flying from within a grove of trees on the left, right, and behind us.

But they had been naïve!

“乙卜(Circle Flame) ——《Flame Wall》!”

The wall of flames produced by Julia-kaasan scattered the fireballs that came flying at us.

“——What!?”

The men in black were disturbed.

In that time, I had already finished making a move.

——Thud thud.

From the gaps between the grove of trees on the left, right, and rear, two men in black collapsed on each side.

Embedded in their throats were fragments of a crystal-like object.

Naturally, it was what I had done by combining [Shuriken Techniques] and [Physics Magic].

Some of the guys had been hiding in a blindspot of this area, so I altered the trajectory of the fragments with [Physics Magic].
It was semi-guesswork but everything seemed to hit splendidly, which was the best outcome.

The objects were only crystals so it might be hard see them come flying.

I think the men's surprise only lasted an instant.

Nevertheless, that instant was more than enough of an opportunity for Dad.

Dad's hands seemed to blur, and in the next moment, two of the men in black had their windpipe's slit.

The remaining man had, not his throat, but his shoulder pierced by the spearhead, which sealed his movements.

The one Dad left was, naturally, the leader.

The black-clad leader was, with his shoulder still pierced, glaring at Dad with a fierce look.

Having seen the situation, the subordinate knights approach the black-clad leader at Dad's signal.

"——Ugh……so this is the end!"

The man in black opened his mouth with a crazed look.

——Not good!

Dad was unable to move due to him piercing the man in black in the shoulder with his spearhead.

I promptly send a pebble that was lying on the ground flying with a kick, accelerate it with [Physics Magic] and fling it into the man's mouth.

——Crunch……!

A terribly unpleasant noise sounded.

He probably tried to bite the poison in his molars but it seems like he put in a great amount of strength into closing his jaw.

……Well, if it was a poison that could be broken easily, then there would be the possibility of it breaking unnecessarily.

From the mouth of the man in black who fainted and collapsed from the shock, a blood-covered, white something came falling out.

Somehow, I don't really want to imagine such a thing……

"……Ed, you did well."

Dad says, and pats my head.

"——Let's take this guy to Fauno City. We can decide what to do after that."

---

27. Provincial City (Firebird)

| TOC |

“Waa, it’s been a long time!”

Mom is in high spirits while leaning out through the window of the carriage.

——Two days after traveling by carriage from Trenadette Village.
The day after the attack by the men in black, we reached Fauno City.

Fauno City is the provincial city governed by Alfred-tousan——Viscount Chrebl.
It’s on the way to the Capital from the mansion in Corbette Village.

We, the jolly group of Viscount Chrebl, went through the main street still in the carriage and arrived at the villa of Viscount Chrebl standing next to a big building.
It’s mostly the same size as the one in Corbette Village, but due to the larger buildings nearby, it looks somewhat smaller.

When it’s not used by Viscount Chrebl, it’s apparently utilized as a guesthouse, so

“Since we can’t really afford to let an unused mansion stand idle.”

dad said this tough life sounding sentence.

We asked the servants of the mansion to prepare a late lunch, so first we have a meal.

Steph is beside me under the pretext of getting rid of the fatigue from the trip.

While we were enjoying some tea after the meal, dad said this.

“I’m going to greet the city council after this….. Julia, what will you do?”

“Let’s see…. maybe I will visit my friends, it’s been a long time?”

“Then you should do that. What do you want to do Ed?”

“….where is mom going?”

“Me? I’m going to the Adventurer Guild.”

Adventurer Guild!?

“Going with!”

“Oya, Ed is also interested in being an adventurer? As expected of a boy.”

‘Rather, this was the first time I saw him react like a child would’, said dad.

“I will leave the man that is most likely a member of Yatagarasu in the care of the guards of this city. Since we took out the poison in the molars it’s probably alright, but I will ask them to be careful anyway. Also, I should tell them to have one of my subordinates be present during the examinations.”

That reminds me there was also that.
I lost my head from hearing Adventurer being mentioned.

Dad, patting me on the head said,

“If you have an interest in adventurers, then you should take a good look. Maybe you can even meet Chester?”

Chester is my second oldest brother.
The C brother from B C D.

Let’s take a look at it after a long time.

《Edgar Chrebl (Fourth son of Viscount Chrebl, Santamana Kingdom Noble)

Relatives
Brothers from a different mother
Bernhardt, 19 years old, Knight, Knight of the Santamana Kingdom Imperial Knights, 《Young Falcon》
Chester, 17 years old, Adventurer (B rank), 《Second Arrow Unnecessary》
David, 16 years old, Santamana Kingdom Royal Library Assistant Librarian《Prodigy》
》

“I think Chester-kun is currently west from here. Since there is a demand for archers during this season.”

“Aah, was it the season when flocks of harpies migrate? Certainly, with Chester’s skill it’s probable he received a summon.”

Hnn.《Second Arrow Unnecessary》is not just for show it seems.

That reminds me,

“….dad, how are you, with the bow?”

As I asked, dad put on a bitter smile.

“Ah, me? It’s strange because I’m a half-elf, but I’m quite bad with the bow somehow. I can use it as much as a normal person, but I am far from being a match for Chester.”

Mhnnn…..?
Does that mean that the 17 years old Chester is higher in Skill than the 39 years old dad, who doesn’t look like he would be negligent with training?

That means the difference between skill levels can't be explained simply by the difference in the amount of effort put into it.

"Since Chester-kun has atavism"

"Atavism?"

"Chester is an elf. Chester's mother—— my first wife was a human and I'm a half-elf, but sometimes this kind of thing happens. That being said, I don't think there are many experts with the bow like Chester, even among the elves."

I see. The village chief of Trenadette Village (Steph's father) said that the Viscount Chrebl Family is a gathering of geniuses, but it seems it's really true.

"My other, brothers?"

"Come to think of it, Ed haven't met any of them yet. We sent them letters that a child has been born, but everyone is busy."

I take a glance at mom.

Mom is the second wife of dad.

My brothers are not mom's children.
Furthermore, in terms of age mom is 20 years old, comparable to the eldest Bernhardt, who is 19.
In my previous world, it wouldn't have been strange even if they were classmates.

I thought there may be a feeling of reservation between them, but

"Bernhardt-kun is a knight in the Imperial Guard and David-kun is an apprentice librarian in the Royal Library, right~. It good and bad to have outstanding children~"

It looks like mom already thinks of the three of them as her own children.
Really, it's not even enough to say that she is big-hearted.
Dad is also very capable, but in front of mom, he is overshadowed.
Better yet, dad should be praised for his ability to keep up with mom as her husband.

"When we go to the Capital we can meet Bernhardt and David. We won't know where Chester will be though."

"Right, he likes travel~"

"Chester really gets along with Julia."

Probably because mom was also an adventurer.

"——Well, let's continue with this topic another time. I'm going to the City Council."

“Okay, be back soon.”

Julia-kaasan said in a happy mood.

Mn? Why is she happy when dad is going away?

I thought of this for a moment, but then I realized immediately.

Being able to say ‘Be back soon’ and see dad off is a happy occasion for her.

Come to think of it, dad was on fortress duty for a long time, so she didn’t really have the opportunity to do so.

“——Mn. I’ll be back, Julia.”

Dad said this like he had similar feelings, hugged mom, then kissed her on the cheek.
After performing the actions that are only allowed for handsome guys, he left, looking a bit embarrassed.

After this, mom was squirming for a while, so the time when we left the mansion was a whole 30 minutes later.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

Fauno City is the center of commerce in this area.

Corbette Village, Riverette Village and Trenadett Village are also the same, but the whole territory of Viscount Chrebl and the neighbouring areas are all grain producing regions.
About half of the grains produced there is gathered here in Fauno City, then get bought up by merchants from the Capital.
Tax income from that grain market is nothing to sneeze at, it’s a precious income source in the territory of Viscount Chrebl.

That being said, it can’t be called a big city, it remains within the scale of a provincial city.
The heart of the city has large buildings like the city council, the feudal lord’s mansion (the mansion of Viscount Chrebl/guesthouse where we were just now) and the guardhouse for the knights, but the outer regions have less and less buildings the further out you are.
Especially now, since it’s a bit early for the grain harvest to flow in, the streets are deserted.

Walking down the main street of that Fauno City, mom entered a building made of stone.

As we walk in by swinging open the half-sized, chest tall wooden doors that is often used in westerns, there is something like a business counter and a bar.
Sitting behind the counter is a pretty young lady and at the bar a few stern looking fellas.

Right, there is no mistake.

Just as it said on the sign outside, this is the Adventurer Guild of Fauno City.

“Hoy! It’s the《Flame Prison Witch》!”

“But I heard she married a noble….?”

A number of questioning gazes shot towards Julia-kaasan from here and there in the guild.

Among them an almost 2 meters tall scary faced man is glaring at not Julia-kaasan, but me instead.

I’m scared.

Boldly ignoring the gazes gathering towards her, mom greeted the young lady at the counter.

“It’s been a long time~! Are you doing good?”

“Julia-san!”

The lady the counter and mom start discussing each other’s current situation.
Mom is talking about her married life, her child that was born (me) and such and the young lady is talking about the state of affairs of the guild and Fauno City and the like, they are talking in a manner peculiar to women where topic jumps around all over the place.

There are some topics that interest me, but I have too little knowledge and there are times when I don’t really understand what they are talking about, but most of all, the discussion is too whimsical.

While listening to the discussion I’m restlessly looking around inside the guild.

Then, all of a sudden someone embraced me from the back.

“Uhyai!?”

I reflexively let out a weird noise.

Mom turned back towards me looking surprised.

“——《Scarlet》!”

“Yo, Julia. It’s been a while.”

Answering from behind me while still hugging me was a young looking female warrior.
She may be over 30 already but her profile that is peeking out next to my face looks fearless and youthful.
She gives off a feeling of a flexible female panther.

By turning my head within the range I could move, I saw that the woman called《Scarlet》was wearing a exceedingly revealing armor.
Using the terminology from my previous world, it’s a bikini armor.

In addition to that, it's a completely red one.
Maybe because her skin is mostly exposed, the woman's body temperature and scent are directly transmitted to me, even though my body is of a child I get a weird feeling.

While poking my cheeks the woman said,

"Is he the rumoured《Baby Scarlet》? Ain't he a cute one."

From her words my head instantly cools off after it almost got dyed pink.

"…..where did you hear about that?"

With the same expressionless face as me, Julia-kaasan asked.

"From a certain source, is all I can say. Well, don't worry. It's nothing more than a rumour at this point."

《Scarlet》-san said while caressing my cheeks.

"…..big sister, is mom's, friend?"

I ask in a charming manner.

"Huhun. That's right. My name is Moria. Moria Mittelt. I'm called《Scarlet》among the adventurers. The reasons for that are my red armor, my dual flamberges…. and also, this scarlet letter."

After saying that, Moria-san opened her cleavage and showed me.
…..well, it was pretty open from the get-go.

Moria-san was somewhat sunburnt, but the cleavage she opened, maybe because it was in the shadow of the armor, was surprisingly white.

"Hey. Not that one. This, this."

Moria-san knocked me, who was looking intently at her pale cleavage, on the head and pointed towards the space between her breasts.

Hey, if it's that place, then it could've been seen even without opening it, couldn't it?

There was something like a brand carved in.

It's somehow——no, this is the magic letter for fire.
In addition to that, it's not the modern one, but it has mostly the same shape as the ancient one.

"ᚦ(Flame)….?"

I unintentionally said it softly out loud.

“Hhnn. As expected of the son of the Flame Prison. That’s right, it has an unusual shape, but it’s the magic letter for fire handed down in my tribe.”

“Why…. is it there?”

“This is a Brand of Sin. In my tribe, those who commit a crime have this magic letter carved on their body.”

I was shocked.

“What did….Moria-san do?”

“I fell in love with a certain man. And that man had a wife. Since I seduced a man who already had a wife and children I received this brand and was exiled from the tribe.”

“……..”

I can’t think of any words to say to Moria-san, who said this with a lonely smile.

“Oops, that wasn’t something to tell a small child. Anyhow, that is the origin of my nickname. I may not look like it, but I was an Ace Adventurer of the Fauno Guild, just like your mother.”

“We grouped up many times to do jobs, right~”

“Julia is an amazing caster, but she is a bit reckless sometimes. She was always making me panicky.”

“She told me to talk casually so that’s why I talk to her like this, but she is really my great senior.”

“Hey, I told you to not say those things. Also, my age will get exposed.”

Mom and Moria-san were laughing together in a friendly manner.

Let’s [Appraise] her for the time being.

《Moria Mittelt Zkornash (Adventurer (A Rank),《Scarlet》)
32 years old

Level 50

HP 117/117
MP 25/25

Skills
・Master class
[Twin-Sword Techniques] 5
[Discern] 3

[Sense Presence] 2

・General
[Twin-Sword Techniques] 9 (MAX)
[Sword Techniques] 7
[Assassination Techniques] 5
[Throwing Axe Techniques] 4
[Keen Hearing] 5
[Stealthy Steps] 5
[Martial Arts] 3
[Battleaxe Techniques] 3
[Shuriken Techniques] 2
[Knife Throwing] 2
[Farsight] 2
》

I see, so this is the status of an A rank adventurer warrior.
If you take away the《The Evil God's Curse of Calamity》from Goleth who I fought at the Ranzrack Fortress, then she would probably be able to fight him evenly.

I also [Appraise] the bikini armor with the risky design along the way.

《Armor of the Flame Spirit：Due to the protection of the Fire Spirits, this armor halves the damage inflicted by fire-type spells.》

Ooh, it looks like it's an amazing piece of equipment.
But, even if it's halved, isn't there no meaning if it exposes that much skin….?

While harboring those doubts, I also [Appraise] the flamberges hanging from both sides of her hips.

《〔Flame Spirit Steel〕Flamberge：Can be used to cut apart fire-type spells.》

I see, she cuts apart the fire-type spells with this, then the bikini armor protects against the remainder.
According to mom, fire-type magic is simple yet versatile, also, many people have an affinity for it so this is the attribute used by the most people.
It's not just easy to form the image for it, but it deals heavy damage against people and could be used to set buildings on fire.
The men in black the other day also used [Fire Magic] to launch a sneak attack, but that also had the aim of confusing the defender side.
Since everybody is afraid of fire.

In any case, that means if you want to prepare equipment to guard against a single element then the first candidate is undoubtedly Fire.

As expected, that means Moria-san made the logical choice.

…….sorry for thinking that you are an exhibitionist at first.

As I was continuously looking at Moria-san, it somehow got misunderstood.
Moria-san hugged me tightly,

“We are both ‘Scarlets’, so that brings us closer. Baby Scarlet sounds like he is my child instead, doesn’t it?”

“Edgar-kun is miine!”

Mom said while snatching me back.
Are you a grade schooler?

“Good grief. You are the same even after becoming a wife.”

Contrary to her words, Moria-san was speaking with a kind smile on her face.

It seems I wasn’t the only one who noticed the sadness flash across that smile.

“…..well, is he still not found?”

Different from usual, mom was hesitant to ask.

“…yeah. He should be 9 years old soon. If he is still alive, that is….”

“Moria…..”

“It was my fault…… I was cast aside by that man and I was frantic….. when I realized he was already taken by somebody…..”

“You mustn’t blame yourself. Miguel-kun absolutely wouldn’t want Moria to despair.”

“…..you’re right.”

Since I didn’t know the circumstances I couldn’t say anything, but then Moria-san slapped her cheeks and changed the subject.

“That reminds me, I heard you are butting heads with 〈Yatagarasu〉?”

“Yeah. We don’t really want to butt heads with them, but….”

Mom told Moria-san what went down until now.
About how we stopped the kidnapping cases in Riverette Village (and the neighboring villages), how we were attacked by 〈Yatagarasu〉members on the way here and how we turned the tables on them. Also, that we managed to capture one of their members.
Different from her usual carefree style of speaking, it was concise and to the point.

“——Kidnapping children systematically, huh. That’s disgusting. They probably sell those children to fund their activities. If I was there I would’ve torn them limb from limb.”

Moria-san said with a frown.

“Anyhow, that was a great work. I will report about the remnants of <Black Wolf Fang> and <Yatagarasu> to the guild chief. He will be vexed when he hears that Julia was here while he was away. That guy was a big fan of Julia.”

“Oh? Baldo-san is away?”

“It seems like the number of harpies are high this year. The guild chief went out to take command himself.”

“The guild chief against the harpies?”

“Not just the guild chief, but apparently many former party members are also participating.”

“By former party members, you mean of the <Northern Six Stars>?”

“Right, right. They said Sigmund-san and Menas-san will rendezvous with them. There were many confirmed sightings of rare species among the flocks of harpies, so they want to be on the safe side it seems.”

“Chester-kun is also participating, right?”

“Yeah. Not just that, but apparently he is working with the former <Norther Six Stars> members. Since he is the hopeful star of the Fauno Guild.”

After that mom kept chatting with Moria-san and other people.

Maybe I looked bored, the scary looking adventurer came closer and gave me some candy.

It was the near 2 meters tall giant adventurer that I thought to be scary at the beginning.

It seems the reason why he was glaring at me was because he likes children.

Sorry for twitching a bit when you came near me.

While mom was talking to other people, I was shown around the guild by the adventurer who introduced himself as Huffman-san.
Huffman-san has a scary face, but when he laugh he gives off a naive feeling.
From what I heard during the time I was riding on his shoulders, Huffman-san is a B rank adventurer and he also groups up with my brother Chester sometimes.

We spent the time with various things, so when mom and I left the guild the sun was already going down.

…..Melby looked a bit bored, so that was a bit unfortunate.
The plan is to jump to the Fairy Village during our one night stay here in Fauno City and whittle away at the Separation Barrier, so let’s have her forgive me with that.

| TOC |

28. Interrogation

On the way back from the Adventurer's Guild, we bumped into Alfred-tousan.

He was eating a skewer and talking with one of the stall owners on the main street.

"Al-kun!"

"Hey, Julia. Have you finished your business?"

"Yes, what about you?"

"I've finished making my greetings, so I waited here for you two."

Because this was the way from the Adventurer's Guild to the Viscount Chrebl estate, there was no chance of us passing by each other.

"The man in black is about to be interrogated.
Since I mentioned that we seem to be targeted by <Yatagarasu>, they have been waiting for my presence.
It's not really something to show to women or children, but you two are probably curious too, right?"

"Of course, let's go," said Mum.

I also nod vigorously.

After Dad confirmed our responses,

"Well, shopkeeper-san, I'll be going now."

"Oh, you have such a beautiful wife, I'm jealous. Come by again."

The two exchanged their farewells and we left.

We headed towards Fauno City's guardroom where the city's peacekeeping knights were.

As you go around the perimeter of the city council hall, the rustic building at the back is the guardroom.

"I'm coming in."

With a carefree attitude unbecoming of a Lord, Dad walks into the guardroom.

"We have been waiting, Milord."

A young, honest-looking knight responded to Dad.

"It is this way."

The knight guided us to the basement of the guardroom, where the cells are located.

Inside a cell on a plain looking bed was a man wearing black clothes, bound with bandages and rope.

Since the molars containing poison were removed, he wasn't wearing a gag.

"We used an anaesthetic to slacken his jaw, so there's no need to worry about him biting his tongue," said Dad.

The man in black looked this way after hearing his voice.

When he attacked us, he was wearing a mask that covered the lower half of his face, but now his full face is exposed.

He looked tough and strong-willed, but had an average face.

He glanced at us, who had stopped outside his cell.

Err……what was his name again?
[Appraisal]

《Lucretio:〈Yatagarasu〉Seventh Squad, Squad Leader. Level:33.》

Ah, yes, Lucretio.

"Yo, how are you feeling, Assassin-kun?"

Dad asked.

He looked scary despite the smile he had on.

"Assassin……? What are you talking about. I'm just a kidnapper."

"Hmm. Then you admit to being a companion of the people who were kidnapping children around Riverette Village?"

"……Don't know them."

"So you insist that you were working alone?"

"……That's right."

He's clearly lying.
However, it seems like it will be difficult to make him tell the truth.

Then Melby suddenly revealed herself.

"I will also help."

“Eh-……?”

I’m surprised by the sudden proposal.

“These guys spread rumours about how we fairies kidnapped children, right?

“Y, yeah……”

“Then they are enemies of mine as well.”

“You say you will help, but how?”

“I can just use [Fairy’s Eye].
Since I will know for sure when he is lying, we can try asking him some questions.”

At Melby’s words, Dad nods.

“That will help. I leave him to you, Melby-san.”

Dad used -san for Melby’s name.
Fairies are supposedly well respected by elves.
Since Pioneer Elves made fairies, I thought that elves were descended from the faeries’ masters, but it doesn’t seem to be that simple of a story.

As a side note, when Melby asked to take me to the Fairy Garden once a month, Dad immediately gave his consent.
The story about me wanting to free Melby’s sealed master also concluded during the journey.
Dad added the condition that Julia-kaasan or himself were to accompany me, but I saw no harm in it.
Ah, but being seen chiseling away at the barrier for ages wouldn’t be that good though……

Anyway, Dad is going to interrogate the Man in Black — Lucretio now.

“You are a member of <Yatagarasu>, right?”

“….. I’ve been trying to tell you that’s wrong.”

“That’s a lie.”

At Melby’s words, Dad and Mum look at each other and nod.

By the way, Lucretio can’t see Melby.

“I wonder what position in <Yatagarasu> you have…”

“……Like I said, I don’t know any <Yatagarasu>.”

“He’s lying.”

“You, as an underling of <Yatagarasu>, don’t hold much information.”

“……That’s because I don’t know any <Yatagarasu>.”

“Lie.”

“In <Yatagarasu>, you had a position where you were able to put together quite a few subordinates.”

“……You’re wrong.”

“Lie.”

“You know the kidnappers who took the children at Riverette Village.”

“I’m saying I don’t know.”

“Lie.”

“You were in a position where you could lead the kidnappers at Riverette Village.”

“Wrong.”

“Truth.”

“Okay……so you worked separately from the kidnappers.”

“……”

Lucretio closed his mouth to hide his agitation.
His mouth was quivering, probably due to the anaesthetic’s paralysis.

“You knew about the kidnappers’ failure, and were ordered to hunt us, who knew the circumstances, down.”

“……k, Wrong!”

“Lie.”

“The Archbishop of <Yatagarasu> gave you the order. Archbishop Glutometsa. Just saying his name makes my mouth feel tainted. He does the work of the devil, he’s not even a perso–”

“You’re wrong! Wrong wrong wrong! Archbishop-sama is a holy person!”

“First half, lie. The second half was the truth.”

“You finally showed your true colours. You’re a member of <Yatagarasu>. Am I right?”

“……What about it?”

“Truth.”

“Then let’s have you spit out everything. <Yatagarasu>’s structure, personnel deployment, and everything else; if it’s confidential information, anything is fine .”

“Who would say those things. Even if you torture me, I won’t tell you.”

“Well, well, you’re pretty professional aren’t you? A filthy assassin who worships The Evil God in high regard and goes around killing innocents is……”

Dad said as if he was boasting about his own faults, laughing as if he were mocking the assassin.
Since his natural face is beautiful, this face has a lot of impact.
Of course, this should be for the purpose of provoking Lucretio so he spills the beans.

“We are proud messengers! What do you know!
We must defeat the devil!
If we don’t defeat the devil, this world will fall to ruin!
We who commit to that liturgy, what did you just call us!?
Filthy!?
That would be you people!
To not even look at the sacred duty bestowed by Founder-sama, people who eat like dogs and sleep like pigs like you are the filthy ones!
Damn minions of the devil!
Release me from my admonitions!
I will make you an offering to the one who continues to battle against the devil, the holy Evil God, Monguenues-sama! ”

Lucretio snapped at Dad’s provocation.
He has way too little resistance against mocking.
If he snaps at this level of provocation, he will never get good at fighting games.

But……it came to Monguenues, huh.
On top of that, “The holy Evil God who continues to battle against the devil”, huh.

<Yatagarasu> isn’t just an assassin organisation, it’s evidently a **religious cult** of assassins.

But……why were these guys kidnapping children?

Lucretio continued to spout nonsense after that, so Dad had no choice but to temporarily stop the interrogation.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

“Fu~. Well damn.”

It had gotten completely dark by the time we were heading back, and Dad was complaining as we walked behind the city council hall.

The light that Mum made with ∩(Light) was directed at and illuminated the ground for a few metres in front of us.

With the hand that wasn't maintaining ∩(Light), Mum held my hand.

Melby was floating in the air next to me.

Dad continued to grumble.

"Hearing his story makes me feel as if we're in the wrong.
I should tell the knights who are in charge of interrogation to continue in shifts instead of persevering at it."

That's true, he definitely seemed convinced of the existence of "The holy Evil God who continues to battle against the devil".
If someone were to stay with him for too long, they would probably go crazy as well.

"What's an evil god?"

I asked, with a face like I don't know.

"Ah, so Ed doesn't know.
The Evil God is a legendary being who calls himself Monguenues and is trying to incite mankind into destroying the world with their own hands."

"Legend……is it?"

"Well, who knows.
Since Gods that have been called Benevolent Gods exist, it wouldn't be strange if an Evil God exists.
But, the story about the Evil God fighting a Devil, that's the first time I've heard it."

"Al-kun, it would be best not to seriously believe what that man in black says."

"Well, it's not like I took it seriously…… but it seems like it may have affected me a bit."

Dad shook his head with a frown.

"If you're talking about an Evil God, then there is one."

Melby suddenly said.

"Eh? Really?"

Said Dad.

"Really. The one who sealed my master should have been an apostle of the Evil God."

"Hmm……"

“Among the Evil God’s apostles, there seems to be one with the ability to influence other people through hearsay.
If Alfred-san felt persuasiveness in that man’s words, then maybe that man has an apostle of the Evil God supporting him.”

“The Evil God’s apostle!?”

Dad couldn’t believe Melby’s words straight away.

From my perspective, I thought that Melby’s apprehensions seemed plausible enough, but it would be hard to convince Dad of that.
I don’t think I will be able to explain about the incident with Goleth well either; we still haven’t even talked about it yet.

“Edgar-kun, aren’t you tired?”

Mum came to ask.

“I’m fine.”

Indeed, I’ve been walking around with Mum all day, a normal 3-year old would be completely worn out.

Since my [No Fatigue] is working perfectly today as well, my body’s condition is no worse than how it was at the beginning of the day.
If anything is strange……it’s that I’m a little hungry.

“Edgar-kun, you have quite the stamina, don’t you ?”

Even Julia-kaasan can’t believe it.

While looking at Mum’s state, I think.

——I might be reaching the limit of how long I can hide it for.

In regards to that, I’ve already secretly asked Melby for advice.

“Um, sorry, I might not be able to help.”

Is what she said.

For a fairy who can’t lie, it’s hard to keep secrets anyway.
Thus, she has never had to worry about how to reveal a secret.

“Thinking about the other person’s feelings is important but ……As I expected, honesty is best, right?”

Even if she says that, the content of the secret is *that*, so…

As I was thinking and walking, I didn't notice Mum stop walking and almost fell over.

"That is……"

Mum murmers as she looked into the darkness.

I belatedly follow her line of sight.

At the entrance of an alley, a servant-looking young woman and a man wearing traveller garb are huddled together.

But it doesn't seem like they are lovers.

The man brings his face closer to the woman, pressing her with a sharp tone.

I look at the woman's face again and feel that I have seen her before.

"That girl is…… one of our servants, isn't she?

At Dad's words I realise.

[Appraisal].

《Marcella Rinne: Chrebl Viscount House Servant.》

"Marcella-san"

"You remember. Yes, that's her name. And the man is……?"

[Appraisal] —— that was what I had planned on using, but Mum walked forward and blocked my line of sight.

Mum continued to walk towards the two.

Since Mum was still using ∩(Light), the two spotted Mum quickly.

"Hey. What do you need from our servant?"

Mum asked the man.

The man spoke as if he was spitting the words out.

"……It's none of your business."

"Didn't I just say she is our servant? If you're too stubborn–"

Mum lights the tip of her finger with a flame.

"–I will become your opponent?

“……. I was just bringing that person a message.”

Mum asks the servant with her eyes.

The servant, after hesitating, said this,

“……Y-yes. That person is a messenger from home, Madam Julia.”

“……Really?”

“Yes……”

Mum warily observed the man and,

“Marcella-san is from the capital right?
–How has the capital been, Messenger-san?”

“……Hmm. The capital has been dangerous, recently. When I left, rumours of the Demonic Ripper were everywhere. The guy who awakens every few years, the apparition of the capital.

“Demonic Ripper……?”

When I murmured as I walked closer, the man grinned,

“That’s right, kid. If a brat like you wanders around in the middle of the night, a scary ladywill appear and say…… “I will cut your mouth with these scissors”.”

“……Isn’t that the Slit-mouthed Woman?”

“Huh? What did you say, kid?”

“No, just that it’s scary.”

“Keh. A brat who isn’t scared by threats.
So, Madam, if your doubts have disappeared, can I leave?”

“……I suppose so.”

When Mum reluctantly nodded, the man turned his back to us and left.

I look at the man as if disciplining him, and cast the familiar [Appraisal]——

“——!!”

As I try to [Appraise] the man’s back, I’m frozen.

The man turned around right when I was about to use [Appraisal].

Was I found out……? No, it has to be a coincidence…….

Our gazes meet.

The man grinned, raised his index and middle fingers, and gestured like he was trying to cut something.

At the same time, he moves his mouth.

——Snip.

Even after the man disappeared into the alley, chills run up my spine and don’t seem to go away.

| TOC |

29. Priest (Firebird)

In the evening, before dinner, a servant (a different person from Marcella-san from before) informed us of a visitor.

Alfred-tousan said “Ooh, he arrived.” and went to personally welcome him.

Julia-kaasan and I are sitting at the table waiting for dad.

The servants in charge of the kitchen (that also includes Marcella-san) are arranging the food on the dinner table.

The meal is for 4 people.

Those four should be dad, mom, me, and the guest.

By the way, next to me there is a small cup filled with juice for Melby.
In the juice there is a — apparently very valuable — thin glass straw.
Using that to drink the juice, Melby looks very much like a flower-nectar-drinking fairy.

Next to that I’m reading『Abaddon Magic Compilation』as I’m waiting for the preparations for the meal to be done.

“——Everyone present?”

Dad appeared in the dining room while saying that.

He brought a middle-aged clergyman looking person with him.

The abundant white hair and drooping eye-corners give off an ineffable kind impression.

Dad says to that person,

“However, this was fortunate. I didn’t think that you were stopping by this city at just the right time. There, please have a seat. Sadly we can’t offer that much.”

“Mm, thanks for your concern. My body has become somewhat dull lately, you see. Those cheap lodgings are hard on me sometimes.”

“You are not young anymore, please take care of your body. Can’t you just stop patrolling and settle somewhere as a priest?”

“I can’t really do that. Lately, there are more temples, but there aren’t many people that have the [Oracle] Skill.”

“Right, there are many requests, but there are only a few priests who can fulfill them. ….oh, let’s take a seat before continuing.”

Dad is offering the seat on the opposite side from his to the priest(?).

Then,

“Father Solow. This is my son, Edgar. And you already know my wife, Julia.”

“Ooh, this is a really lovely child.”

“My name is Edgar.”

I don’t really know what’s going on, but I introduce myself and bow for the time being.

“It’s been a long time, Father.”

Mom also greeted him while taking a seat at the dinner table.

“——Ed, this is a patrolling priest for the Samsara Temple, Solow Atra-Abaddon-sama.”

“Abaddon!?”

I raised my voice unintentionally.

Then I showed the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』I left on the seat next to me to him.

“——Hou. That’s nostalgic. That is a book written by my great-grandmother.”

“Great-grandmother…..”

That means that this priest is a great-grandson of Abaddon.
Or rather,

“Abaddon, was a woman?”

“Mm, that’s right. But it looks like people are under the impression that she was a man. Nobody could match her in scholarly sciences, but she was also proud and passionate. Because of friction with her surroundings she apparently spent her last years deep in the mountains to keep people away.”

…..that’s somehow very understandable.
I always thought it was written by a grumpy old man.

“Nevertheless, quite an astute child. To think that he is reading that famously difficult book in that age. Even I was already over 40 years old when I could truly understand the value of that book. Is it the result of madam’s guidance?”

“No, I didn’t do anything. Edgar-kun is a smart child.”

“Hohhohho. It looks like the《Flame Prison Witch》also has the virtue of modesty.”

From the words of Julia-kaasan Father Solow was smiling sarcastically.
Well, it’s very well impossible for a child to read a difficult book soon after being born and

without the guidance of his parents.

"——Also, there is a lovely Fairy-san with him, I see."

As the priest said that I turn my gaze toward where Melby is.

"You can see her?"

I asked.

"Mm, I can't see her completely, but I can vaguely tell that she is there."

Hearing those words from the priest, Melby and I exchange glances, then

"Good evening, Father Solow. I'm Melby. As you can see I'm a fairy and I'm currently acting together with Edgar."

"Hou…. with Edgar-kun. To be liked by a Fairy at this age."

"I-It's not about liking him or anything… it's just something that's necessary…."

Melby is mumbling while sipping juice through the straw.

"Then, Alfred-dono. You said there was something you need to ask of me this evening…..?"

Dad nods to the Priest's words.

"To tell you the truth, we would like you to perform Transference on him."

Transference…?

Leaving the frowning me aside, the two adults continue their conversation.

"Hou. But, isn't it a bit early? He looks like quite an astute child, but he shouldn't be at the age where he could gain skills yet?"

"Well, that isn't the case. …..I would like you to keep everything I tell you from now on a secret if possible."

"But of course. I will keep the secrets regarding Skills even if I have to die. If that's what I have to do as a Priest of the Samsara Temple."

After confirming the nod from the priest, dad says.

"This child is only about 8-month-old."

"8 month, you say…..? He looks surprisingly big for that?"

The priest was surprised.

“Is Father familiar with the recent incident at the Ranzrack Fortress?”

“Mm, of course. It was unfortunate for Alfred-dono, but it was unexpected good fortune for the Kingdom of Santamana for you to be there at that time. I heard that you, together with your wife, played an important role.”

“Who played an important role was mainly my wife. No, to be precise, it was my wife and this child.”

“This child….? Edgar-kun did?”

“Yes. I reveal this information because I believe in Father’s duty of confidentiality. The one who defeated the head of the enemy, the leader of <Black Wolf Fang>, Goleth, in a close to one-versus-one confrontation was this child——Edgar. The reason for his body being larger than his age would suggest is the side-effect from the Level Up that time.”

“Goodness….”

The priest is taking a good look at me, looking confused himself.

Or rather, dad, is it alright to reveal that much?
That probably means that he trust this priest that much, but….

I’ve become a little uneasy, so I try using [Appraise] that became harder to detect under Melby’s guidance.

《Solow Atra-Abaddon (Samsara Temple Patrolling Priest, Senior Priest Atra,《Soul Saint》)
67 years old
Level 35

HP 40/40
MP 55/55
Condition: Pledge to the God of Samsara (Due to the pledge towards the Goddess Atrazenec, who governs the endless cycle of death and rebirth, cannot reveal any information gained by the use of the Skill [Oracle] to a third party.)

Skills
Mythical class
+ [Aptitude Diagnosis] –

Master class
[Oracle] 5
[Healing Magic] 4
[Mental Toughness] 2

General
[Prayer] 9(MAX)
[Medical Care] 9(MAX)

[Water Magic] 4
[Pharmacist] 4
[Command] 4
[Light Magic] 3

《God of Samsara's Attention》(Due to the many years of devotion, gained the attention of the Goddess Atrazenec, who governs the endless cycle of death and rebirth. When using the Skill [Oracle], can discern the aptitudes of the subject. Small supplement to the acquisition and learning speed of skills related to Divine Skills.)》

Ooh, so many Skills I haven't seen yet.

But I will look at the Skills sometimes later.
I can take a look at them later through the [Database] anyway.

What I should focus on now is the「Pledge to the God of Samsara」in the Condition column.

It seems that due to the pledge to the Goddess I know well, a priest can't reveal any information gained by that [Oracle] Skill.
It sounds like he could reveal information that was gained not via the Skill, but judging from dad's demeanor the priests of the Samsara Temple should have something like a duty of confidentiality, like doctors and lawyers from my previous world, that prohibit them from revealing any information gained while on the job to a third party.

Goddess-sama also said I should visit a Temple sometimes.
In addition to that, it looks like they trust each other with dad, so it should be alright to trust him for now.

……that being said, my status should be quite an aberrant one already, so I am somewhat reluctant to reveal it completely as it is.

For times like this, I learned the way to repel [Appraise] from Melby, but I'm unsure whether it can also be used against [Oracle].

While I was deep in thought, the priest seemed to finish gathering his thoughts.

"….I don't think Alfred-dono, who is famous for being upright and clean handed, would tell a lie like this. Therefore, the fact that this child defeated the leader of that mercenary group should be the truth. I shouldn't pry too much either. I will just accept the fact that such a thing happened."

'But', the priest continued.

"Your parents must have been very worried over this. Due to my occupation, I have seen many children before that were born with unique statuses. But as one would expect, I haven't seen one that could defeat a leader of a mercenary group soon after being born yet. Parents are usually dismayed by even the smallest abnormality. Alfred-dono and Julia-dono, everything that happened must've been very confusing, but being able to keep that to

yourselves and deal with it calmly like you two did is something that people are rarely able to do."

"……"

Alfred-tousan solemnly nodded to the priest's words.
…..Julia-kaasan is tilting her head like she doesn't know what he is referring to.

"Very well. Normally I would refuse to perform the Transference on a less than 3 years old baby, but this time, I will accept it especially."

"Thank goodness….."

Dad lets out a sigh of relief.

"Then, about the compensation….?"

"This time is special. I don't need compensation."

"But…."

"Since I'm doing something outside the conventions of the Temple I can't accept any fee. If you are not satisfied even then….. then you should make a donation to this city's Temple."

"But I'm the Lord of this City. I can't do something as unreasonable as that."

"Fufuh. Even though it wouldn't be found out if you don't tell anyone, Alfred-dono really has a stubborn personality. Then you should think of it this way. I've been on the path of a patrolling priest for a long time, but this is the first time I've seen something like this. For me, this is excellent research material. Think of it as receiving student fees from me and give up on the compensation."

"Mm…."

"Your expression tells me you are not convinced. What I said just now is not really a lie to me. I'm of the opinion that there is nothing more interesting than the Statuses around the world. Looking at someone's Status I can see not just their abilities and extent of Skills, but also their combat experience and tactics they are good at. If I analyse it further then their way of life, their personality and their beliefs also shine through, everything that led to that person having that Status…. Furthermore, behind those, I can even catch a glimpse of the intentions of the God of Samsara, Atrazenec and the protections bestowed upon us. It's a shame that due to my pledge I can't publicize my findings, but for someone that serves that God of Samsara, there can't be anything more interesting or more appreciated than Statuses. That is why, to me, the opportunity to look at this small child's Status is a reward that can't be exchanged for gold."

"….I understand. If you say this much I will make sure not to mind it. However, If there is anything that I might be able to help with, then by all means tell me. At that time I will do

everything in my power to help.”

“Umu. If I don’t accept that consideration that it would be a lack of courtesy instead. I will make sure to ask without reservations at that time.”

As both dad and the priest compromised bit by bit, the discussion was settled.
Both of them have a stubborn personality.

That being said, thanks to that I could decide to have faith in this priest.
The respectful attitude towards dad even though their age is as far apart as a parent and child, his adherence to the regulations of the Samsara Temple while having the flexibility to help those that are troubled.
And the most important, I recognized his careful handling of Statuses, filled with interest and piety.
As one would expect, people that gained the attention of the Goddess-sama are extraordinary.

“Then I will start with the Transference, but before that, I would like to mention a few important points regarding the Transference. The Transference is a ritual, where, under the permission of the subject, I make an enquiry to the God of Samsara, Atrazenec-sama with the [Oracle] Skill. With the [Oracle] Skill I come under a kind of semi-possession by a God, then my arm moves under the command of the God and notes down the subject’s Status on the previously prepared slip of paper. However. Not necessarily will the entire Status be noted down. About the part of the Status that the subject wishes to hide, one has to only think of it silently and it will be exempted from being noted down by me. This limitation was created by the God, thinking of the cases where the Status could hold confidential information of grave importance to the subject. So Edgar-kun, if you have a Skill that you don’t want to reveal, then you don’t have to disclose it here and now. I would like you to undergo the Transference after thinking it through well.”

The priest said this with a serious expression.

I see… so that’s how it works.
Then there is no need to expressly reject the [Oracle].

“That being said, there is absolutely no need to worry about whether I would reveal those secrets or not. When I became a priest I made a pledge to the God of Samsara. A pledge that I absolutely can’t divulge any information gained by the [Oracle] Skill. This pledge can’t be broken even if I want to. This pledge once made will not go away until the grave, a type of Abnormal Condition. Therefore, you don’t need to think about hiding your Status from me. That being said, if you want to hide it anyway, then I can’t stop you from doing so.”

As the priest finished his explanation a silence fell near the dinner table.

I raised my head and clearly said.

“——I will be in your care, Father”

The priest nodded with a solemn expression.

| TOC |

30. Confession

——The arm of the priest moves quickly.
Each time it does so, the piece of paper on the table reveals a new part of the status.

I underwent the transference from the priest after the meal.

The results of one's first transference is a record to be commemorated.
The piece of paper laid on the table was lavishly decorated with gold-leaf.

On that extravagant piece of paper, the priest was writing words down without any hesitant strokes.
His eyes were half-closed, and didn't seem to be focusing on anything.

The priest's arm suddenly stopped after writing the last line of the status.

He slowly opened his eyes.

He dropped his gaze to the paper on the table ——then, he opened his eyes wide.

"This, this is……!"

The priest leaned over the paper, moving his eyes and neck at an amazing speed, looking over the paper over and over again.
When he finished, he blinked tightly, pinched the bridge of his nose and shook his head over and over, checked over the paper once more, before leaning back into his chair.

……Mn, thank you for the good reaction.

"Fa, Father……?

Alfred-tousan asked with a, as expected, worried face.

"O, oh……It's complete.
The transference went fine, it succeeded.
My goodness, I thought it might have failed for a moment, but it succeeded without a doubt.
It should have succeeded…… no, that's enough.
For now, take a look at this."

The priest signed the paper and displayed it in front of Dad.

"Well, then……huh?"

Dad freezes.

"Geez what's with you two? Is there something strange in Edgar-kun's status……ehh!?

Mum freezes as well.

I also try to take a peek at the paper.

The contents are like this.

『Trustee__Edgar Chrebl」
Oracle__Solow Atra Abaddon」
」
Level__31」
HP__63」
MP__2142」
」
Skills」
」No fatigue－__Instant Interpretation－」
」Appraisal 9__Database－」
」Physics Magic 8__Enchant Magic 3__Mana Control 6__Letterless Invocation 6__Magic Language 1」
」Throwing Spear Techniques 5__Flying Sword Techniques 2__Shuriken Techniques 5__Throwing Axe Techniques 2__Knife Throwing 2__Fire Magic 7__Water Magic 2__Wind Magic 6__Earth Magic 2__Light Magic 3__Telekinesis Magic 9__Mana Manipulation 9__Simultaneous Invocation 9__Mana Perception 1__Cryptanalysis 2__Eavesdropping 3__Farsight 2」
」
」Blessing of a Benevolent God＋1（Atrazenec）」
I guarantee that there are no mistakes in the above results of the Oracle. Solow Atra Abbadon』

I suppose the ”」” at the beginning and end of each line and the ”__” that fill the spaces were used to prevent false data from being written.
It’s similar to the receipt format I learned at my company in my previous life.
There’s only one other strange part, but that can wait until after I explain to Mum and Dad.

Putting that aside, I’ve been troubled for a while.

In regards to how much of my status I should show.

In the end, I decided to not hide any of it.

One of the reasons is that it would be hard to raise my skills if I continued to hide the characteristics of [No Fatigue].
But more than that, Alfred-tousan and Julia-kaasan are trying to protect me with all their might—— I don’t want to lie to those two.

……Although I say that, I did waver a bit when the priest said it was possible to hide my skills.

But since I knew that the priest had the abnormal condition of being unable to tell anyone about the status he saw here, I figured that showing all of it to see how big a reaction it would cause wouldn’t be a bad idea.

I got a bigger reaction than I had been expecting, so I do feel a little bad about it.

"……Err, so this is…… not a mistake, right?

Dad, who finally woke up from his stupor, said.

"……Yes. I can understand your feelings, but this is definitely the result of the Oracle."

"The skills take up 4 lines, why is that?"

Mum asks.

"The skills in the bottom line represent his General skills. The second line from the bottom is for Master Class skills.
This much you should already know."

"Y, yes…… both Julia and I have Master Class skills.

"Ah, that's right.
Alfred-dono has [Spearmanship] and Julia-dono has [Fire Element Magic].
It's rare for both spouses to have Master Class skills.]"

"But what is going on with this child's skills? The bottom two lines are abnormally full, and I've never heard of any of the skills in the top two lines."

"No……Fatigue? Appraisal……?"

The couple tilt their heads in unison, and the priest nodded solemnly.

"The skills that are third from the bottom are called Legendary Class skills."

"Wha-……! Legendary……!?"

"Eeeeeeh-!?"

Mum and Dad were surprised.

"According to the teachings passed down in the Samsara Temple, they are skills that the masters in the ranks of masters can attain only when they get some kind of good fortune.
Among those, [Appraisal] is famous just with its name.
It lets you decipher the hidden information in all things, an ability that deserves the title 'Legendary'."

"Decipher the hidden information in all things……?
Th-that's it! Occasionally Ed will know about something he shouldn't have learned yet, so that's why!"

After hearing the priest's words, Dad said that, taken aback.

……As I thought, you had been concerned about that.

“Was this also how he learned magic so fast? Uh-uh, that seems kind of wrong……?”

Julia-kaasan muttered while tilting her head.

“The two of you, isn’t it a bit too soon to be surprised?
The line of skills at the top is probably for… Mythical Class skills, it can only be that.”

““M-mythical Class!?””

“Yes. Above even the Legendary Class—— with effects that transcend the principles of this world, a rare skill that can only be bestowed directly from the Gods. And to have two of them……”

“[No Fatigue] and…… the other is written in **unreadable characters.**”

Dad muttered with a frown.

That’s right. [Instant Interpretation] was not written in the characters of this world, but in Japanese.

“Hmmm. Edgar-kun, do you have any ideas about this?
Or rather, to what level do you understand your own skills?”

The priest asks me.

“The General skills and Master Class skills I got on my own.
I’ve had No Fatigue since I was born.”

“What kind of skill is [No Fatigue]? I’ve been a priest for such a long time, but I have never heard of it.”

“I don’t get tired. I don’t need to sleep either.”

“You don’t get tired? You said it’s fine to not sleep?”

“I did think that Edgar-kun had a lot of stamina for a small child, but to think it was because of a skill like this…….”

Mum muttered, looking slightly shocked.

“Just wait, Ed knew about this but he didn’t tell us?
Well, it is something that would be bad to carelessly mention, but how was Ed able to judge that it would be bad to carelessly mention the skill?”

“That is……”

I say, faltering.

“Hmm……That Divine Protection might play a part in this.”

The priest says.

“Look at this. The final line in his status.
This child was born with a strong blessing from Atrazenec-sama.
Saying this is a little…. But even I, who have worked as a priest of Atrazenec–sama’s for many years, remain at a standstill after being noticed by Atrazenec-sama. It means that Edgar-kun was born in this world shouldering the destiny to surpass even me.”

“The destiny to surpass the Father……”

“One more thing, and this also a teaching of the Samsara Temple; Among the ones who are born with the Blessing of the God of Samsara, there are some who are born with the memories of their previous life.”

“Knowledge of their previous life, huh.”

Alfred-tousan looked at me, perplexed.
Julia-kaasan also looked at me anxiously.

I resolved myself and replied.

“I have knowledge of my former life.
This is why my skills are so abnormal.
I don’t know how it is in this world, but from what I’ve learned by listening in on Mum and Dad, I thought it would be better if I didn’t talk about it.”

“Is the second Mythical-Class skill connected to that by any chance?”

“The second Mythical class skill is called Instant Interpretation. It translates a language called ‘Japanese’ from my previous life to the Marquekt Common Language.”

“I see.”

The priest nodded once and turned to face Mum and Dad.

“This child could have kept his skills hidden from me.
But instead, he decided to share them with you, his parents.
——Edgar-kun, why did you decide to open up to Alfred-dono and Julia-dono?”

The priest probably asked because he knew what I want to say.

“I didn’t want to keep it a secret.
From here on, there will probably be a lot of times when I will need to hide my skills.
But I didn’t want to keep them a secret from Mum and Dad.”

“Then conversely, why did you keep it a secret until now?”

"……Because I didn't want to scare them"

Mum and Dad quietly listen to my story.

"I heard about your actions at Ranzrack Fortress, did you not think about hiding your abilities then?

"It was because I thought Mum and Dad were at risk.
Goleth was a dangerous opponent who had accepted the Evil God's curse of calamity."

"Did you say《The Evil God's Curse of Calamity》!?"

Dad asks the startled priest.

"Father, just what exactly is《The Evil God's Curse of Calamity》(?)……?"

"Edgar-kun was blessed by the Goddess of reincarnation, Altrazenec, one of the Benevolent Gods. On the other hand, there are those who draw the attention of the Evil God, Monguenues, and are granted tremendous power by making a deal. I was in doubt of this until now but……"

Mum says to the frowning priest.

"Back then, the leader of <Black Wolf Fang>, Goleth, certainly had some strange powers. He threw spears empowered by powerful magic hundreds of metres, destroying the fort's walls. I probably couldn't have won if Edgar-kun hadn't fought."

"Mn…… so he was strong enough to make the《Flame Prison Witch》say that."

"With the Evil God's curse of calamity, Goleth had given up part of his lifespan to receive a great bonus to his HP and MP and even gained the Enchant Magic skill."

"Bonus? What exactly are you talking about?"

"By bonus, I mean that with the Evil God's curse of calamity or the blessing of a Benevolent God, you can greatly increase your HP and MP. Goleth had added 250 to both his HP and MP."

"A-added 250, you say!? Even though someone should only have 120 HP at most when they've reached level 50."

"Goleth's original HP was 129.
Since it's the result of Appraisal, there's no doubt.

"So you're saying that his HP became three times the original?
His MP also rose, right?
The total is as though Julia's maximum MP had been added on top of his own, huh?
He's a complete monster."

Dad says as he shakes his head.

To add to both his HP and MP, Goleth shaved off 10 years of his lifespan apiece. Since he had to shave off more of his lifespan for the ‘Enchant Magic’ and ‘Toughness’ skills, his lifespan should have become 40 years shorter.”

“……Hm. Is that price cheap or expensive……as expected of an Evil God, huh.”

“It seems Julia and I were in greater danger than I had thought…….
Ed, really, thank you.”

Dad strokes my head.

“But, I wish you would tell us things like that sooner.”

Mum puffs up her cheeks.

“……I’m sorry.”

I said from my heart, as I lowered my head.

My head was enveloped by something warm.

“I also need to say sorry. Edgar-kun was so worried and I didn’t even notice.”

Mum says as she hugs me tightly.
Drops of something warm fell on my head.
As I looked up in surprise, Mum was crying.

“……I’m really sorry.”

“No, it’s fine. —— But,”

Mum lightly hit my head,

“from now on, tell everything to your mother.
Even if it’s something that’s hard to believe.
Then Mum can think about it together with you.”

“……Okay.”

My voice seemed like it would crack.

I started to tear up despite my age.

I should have done this earlier.

31. The path towards becoming a Spellsword (Firebird)

——After that, I was hit by a barrage of questions from my parents and the Priest.

About the nature of [No Fatigue].
About the nature of [Appraise].
About Goleth.
About <Yatagarasu>.
About magic and Skills.
About the memories from my previous world.

I decided to share all the information I know.

First, the way to raise the maximum MP.

——Every time someone with a magic related nickname or with a Blessing from a God uses up all their MP until they faint their maximum MP rises by 1.

I heard this straight from Goddess-sama, so there is absolutely no mistake.

Julia-kaasan has the《Flame Prison Witch》nickname, so if she uses up her MP and faints, then her maximum MP should rise.

Although in contrast to me, who has [No Fatigue], every time mom faints she needs a 3 hour long Growth Sleep, so it's quite inefficient.
Even then, if you keep doing it every day before sleep, in one month your maximum MP will rise by about 30.
If you have 30 MP, then you can shoot《Flame Lance》3 times in theory.

When mom heard what I said, her eyes lit up in fiery blaze, then

"That's, amazing, Edgar-kun! I have to use up my MP before sleep starting from tonight!"

, she said happily.

Regarding the story of how I received the [Enchant Magic] Skill from the Goddess-sama after the battle with Goleth, the one who latched onto it was the Priest.

"What kind of person is Atrazenec-sama!?"

He asks me with a momentum of all but grabbing me.

"A black haired, kind and beautiful person."

As I answered like this,

"Umu. Indeed, according to the legends in the Temple, Atrazenec-sama is known as a Goddess. Although the general public knows her as a man….."

, he mumbled as such.

“That reminds me, mom and dad, you should also undergo the Transference. According to the appraisal results, there are big changes to your Skills and Blessings.”

“What did you say! In that case, let’s do it immediately.”

“…..I think it would be enough to just ask Edgar-kun.”

“I want to verify, the results of appraisal.”

“Ed is careful, huh. That is also knowledge from a different world?”

“Mm. Apparently it’s better for the sample size to be bigger.”

It doesn’t look like they grasp what it means that I have reincarnated, so, in the end, it was settled as having [Knowledge from my previous world], as the Priest said.
I also didn’t have the courage to tell them that their child has an already 30 years old soul.
You may call it half-baked, but I think only this secret I will take with me to the grave.

Even so, with my not having to keep my Status a secret anymore, I feel the weight on my shoulders lessen by a large amount.
It’s also a big plus that since they know about me having knowledge from my previous world, they won’t find it odd if I say something a bit strange.

“Sample?”

“Right, something like, eksample.”

“Example, maybe. That is indeed true.”

So then, in the order of dad, then mom, they underwent the Oracle of the Priest.

The result——

“I received the attention of Marslat-sama!”
“Hooray! [Fire Magic] Level 9! And even the《Spirit of Fire’s Blessing》!”

“Yaay!” “Hooray!”, in an unusually festive mood, my parents high-fived each other.

The servant that brought the drinks over(Marcella-san) is startled by the dancing, with their arms linked, Viscount husband and wife duo.

It’s no use watching that, so I try asking something from the Priest.

“You can measure aptitudes, right?”

“Oh, did you find that out by using [Appraise]? That is amazing. However, I don’t really mind, but you shouldn’t recklessly reveal things you find out with [Appraise]. Do you understand

the reason?”

“It harms the feelings of people?”

“Of course, that is also part of it, but problems don’t end with that. Due to my occupation, I’ve seen many thousands of Statuses so far. As a result of that I can say that those who carry secrets in their Statuses are surprisingly many. If they think that their secret was discovered, then in some cases people may think of silencing Edgar-kun. Therefore, it’s best if, as much as possible, outsiders don’t know about you having [Appraise]. ——No”

The Priest stopped talking for a bit and looked towards mom and dad.
Seeing that we started having a serious conversation, mom and dad stopped dancing from joy and returned to having a subdued expression.

“You shouldn’t speak about having an above Legend class Skill to anyone outside the family. It’s not just how people would think that their secrets are discovered because of [Appraise]. If people find out that you have more than one of such rare Skills, then it would most likely provoke the jealousy of others. Also, there are most likely many that would think of using you for their own purposes.”

“…..I understand.”

I nodded in assent.

“So then, we were talking about Aptitude Diagnosis. Of course, I will do it. As expected, I’m also interested in how the aptitudes of a Godsend child, such as Edgar-kun, are.”

The Priest says that and closes his eyes half-way.

He points his palms upward and makes motions like he is using a scale to measure something.

After waiting for a bit.

“This child is….hm”

Saying that the Priest starts pondering.

“I-I wonder how it is….? What is Edgar suited for?”

Dad asks half uneasily and half expectantly.

After nodding once, the Priest slowly said this.

“Edgar-kun doesn’t have any ability that he especially excels at.”

Everyone present fell down.

“No no, I’m not saying that in a bad way. There is no particularly outstanding

ability——Right, he indeed doesn't have a talent like Julia-dono's fire attribute magic or Chester-kun's archery skills, but on the other hand, as far as I can see, there is nothing that he is particularly unsuited for either."

"Doesn't have anything he is unsuited for….is it?"

Dad asks.

"Mm. Most likely, there is nothing in magic or martial skills that this child won't be able to do. As I can tell, Edgar-kun has an at least average talent in every category that I'm aware of."

"Is that a rare thing?"

"Rare, I'd say. Rather than that, this is the first time I've seen someone with aptitudes like these. Most likely it has something to do with Atrazenec-sama's Blessing….."

That's bullseye, Priest-sama.
Let's see the help info for my《Blessing of a Benevolent God＋1》.

《The blessing of the goddess who governs the transmigration of souls, Atrazenec. Accelerates the soul's growth. Releases all skill acquisition conditions. Medium compensation for the skills' learning | growth.》

Even if I have [No Fatigue], if there are many skills that I can't acquire, then it would greatly lessen its meaning, so it should be Goddess-sama's forethought.

"……aptitudes, all the same?"

"Of course, they are not exactly the same. It's just the difference between them doesn't fall outside of the limits of conventional wisdom. With Julia-dono, Chester-kun, or Edgar-kun's other two elder brothers, and of course Alfred-dono, in contrast to their outstanding aptitude in one domain, they have other domains in which their Skills won't go up no matter what they do."

"Like with dad's archery skills?"

Dad fell down a bit.

"Hohhohho. That's right. By the way, if I have to choose a higher one from Edgar-kun's aptitudes, then I would say [Lightning Magic] first."

"Lightning magic….."

"[Lightning Magic] is a magic developed in recent years, its projectile speed is fast, it also has an effect of numbing the target, therefore many magicians try to learn it, but there are only a few that have the aptitude for it. Apparently, it's hard to form a concrete enough image of [Lightning] for the magic to activate. It's probably a born-with talent of Edgar-kun,

having a concrete image of [Lightning].”

“Image……”

The Priest called it born-with talent, but it’s probably because I reincarnated from a modern Japanese person that used electricity all over the place.

In other words, it’s not born-with, but reborn-with.

…..right, saying it myself, even I think it was lame.

“Compared to Julia-dono’s super first-class magical aptitude it’s somewhat unfavorable, but compared to a second-rate magician, it’s can be said to be a high aptitude.”

……then, doesn’t that mean that I have a more than high enough aptitude?

“Sorry about that. The family of Viscount Chrebl is full of monsters, right? And what’s more, someone that has the Blessing of a God, it’s impossible to not have high expectation, I would say.”

I guess that’s also true.

“How are the martial skills?”

Dad asked.
Since he is a military man, he probably interested in that.

“Right. Projectile weapons in general, bows, spears, and also guns, yes.”

“Projectile weapons, bows, spears…..what was that last one?”

“Guns, it was. I’m not too familiar with it myself, but it’s apparently something like a crossbow that existed in ancient times that had a unique firing mechanism. They are sometimes discovered in ancient ruins, but since the projectile itself can’t be produced with our current technology, it can’t be used properly.”

Hearing「Gun」I was interested, but since dad heard that it can’t be used properly, it looks like he lost interest.

“Does that mean that he is good with weapons that are used to shoot from a distance?”

“It’s most likely not wrong to say that. Also, abilities that『throw』,『shoot』, or『deflect』things. Long things and throwing things, regarding these two points, he has the aptitude to reach first-class. Regarding spears, I would say he barely doesn’t reach the level of Alfred-dono.”

“What about close-combat?”

“……somewhat slow on the uptake.”

That's harsh, damn.

"He seems to have a shining talent in regards to setting up battles, but the best should still be a combat style where he keeps the enemies at bay while using magic to decide the fight. He is not suited for close proximity hand-to-hand combat, so if they close in, then the best course of action would be to put some distance between. Of course, he has at least average talent in it, so if he resolves himself and trains hard in close combat fighting then he should be more than able to fight with it."

If I use fighting games as an example, then it would be a shooting character, I guess.
Keeping the enemies in check with projectiles from far away, slowly whittling away the opponent's vitality, then when the opponent shows some kind of opening, sends a powerful attack as a souvenir, something like that.
It somewhat resembles the combat style of Alfred-tousan.

"His talent in magic, although it doesn't reach the level of Julia-dono, it surpasses the level of an ordinary mage, and most of all, the fact that he has no attribute that he is weak at is a strong point. Instead of specializing in a single attribute like Julia-dono, the best would be to employ various kinds of magic depending on the circumstances. Of course, it would be bad if he became a jack of all trades, but master of none, so he should also polish a single one that will become his core attribute. But, regarding that, he fortunately has the aptitude for [Lightning Magic], so he should develop that. However……hmm."

The Priest started pondering while speaking,

"….if I look at it this way, then this is terrifying talent. Indeed, he doesn't excel in any one talent, but I can't find any weak points. Ordinarily, if one has an aptitude for martial skills then that one doesn't have an aptitude for magic, if one has an aptitude for magic then that one doesn't have an aptitude for martial skills. Or perhaps, if one excels at sword techniques then he's bad with archery skills, if one is good with fire magic then that one can't learn water magic, like that there is a hidden underside to the aptitudes that is their weak points. Rarely some people appear that have a talent for both magic and martial skills, but most of the time those people fall to become a jack of all trades, but master of none, so I advise those to put an emphasis on one of them and keep the other as a support. Edgar-kun is still young. Much too young. If he can keep training of his own volition from this age…..then perhaps….."

After pondering a little more the Priest said.

"——Perhaps aiming to become a Spellsword would be a fine choice."

"Spellsword…..!"

A word that greatly excites male instincts.

"Mm. Rather, this is probably the intention of Atrazenec-sama for you to do just that. If not then she wouldn't have granted a great Blessing such as this."

“For Ed… to become a Spellsword…..”

“Edgar-kun, a Spellsword…..”

Mom, dad, your eyes look like they started sparkling.
Will this be alright?
Please don’t suddenly become a spartan papa & mama, okay?

“There are some people that call themselves Spellswords. It’s especially common amongst energetic adventurers. However, those who were called Spellsword in its true meaning, besides the original《Hero》Albarn, who fought the Evil God Monguenes to a standstill, there were only a few.”

H-, Hero!
And he fought the Evil God to a standstill, you say!?

“According to the legend, a Spellsword is not simply someone who mastered both magic and martial skills. Magic and martial skills——Mastering both of those entirely distinct paths, then by making those two into a『Combo』, one can gain a long forgotten Legendary Skill, this is what they say.”

“O-, ooooh……! “

Crap.
The young boy part of me started trembling from excitement.

It looks like this world doesn’t have a concept of Jobs, but this Spellsword sounds like a so-called Advanced Job (which you can become after mastering multiple other Jobs first).
If you max out multiple Skills, then, I think, depending on the combination of those Skills you can acquire new Skills.

After thinking it through to that point, I suddenly remember something.

“Father. Do you know something, about the process of Skill acquisition?”

“Hohoo….about the process of acquisition. Can you tell me about it more?”

“If you max out a Skill, then you can gain a Bonus Skill. But, there are people that have gained that Bonus Skill without maxing out the Skill. Mom had [Fire Element Magic] even before maxing out [Fire Magic]. On the other hand, dad maxed out [Spear Skills] and gained [Spearmanship] as the Bonus for that in my opinion.”

As I explained it like this,

“Indeed, it was like that for me, but it’s not necessarily the same for everyone. There are many spear users that are not awarded the [Spearmanship] Skill even though they should’ve mastered [Spear Skills]. In contrast to that, although rarely, sometimes people that didn’t reach Level 9 in [Spear Skills] gain the [Spearmanship] Skill.”

Dad added this.

“For me, when the《Flame Prison》nickname appeared on my Status, I think I also gained [Fire Element Magic] together with that.”

“Mmn…..it’s also known among the priests that there are various paths to the acquisition of Skills. However, we are bound by our Pledge to the God of Samsara, so we can’t exchange and examine that information. Of course, from my individual experience I have built a few semi-hypotheses about how I think things work.”

The Priest started speaking after clearing his throat with a ‘Khhm’

“First, the path of acquisition for [Spear Skills] to [Spearmanship], or [Fire Magic] to [Fire Element Magic], is very easy to understand. The same applies to various martial skills and attributes of magic. Somewhat unique are the throwing type Skills. A certain portion of the masters of knife-throwing, axe-throwing, or spear-throwing gain the same [Throwing Techniques] Master Class Skill. Edgar-kun will most likely also gain this Skill eventually.”

Hooooh.
I didn’t know that.
Goleth also had [Throwing Spear Techniques], but he didn’t have [Throwing Techniques].

“Probably the same can also be said about various other Skills, but the verification of those is very difficult, you see. There is also the fact that those that make a living from battles don’t want to reveal how they gained those Skills. I’m sorry that I can’t be of much use to Edgar-kun, but if you learn something about the path of acquisition of Skills, then I would be very grateful if you could also tell me. Of course, I won’t say you should do it for free. I will prepare a suitable compensation for it.”

“I understand.”

I answered, then suddenly realized something.

Melby is very quiet.

As I was thinking that, I looked to my side and saw Melby keeping an eye on the door to the kitchen with a complex expression.

“……what is it, Melby?”

“Mnnnnnnnn….. Just my imagination, maybe?”

I tried to further talk to Melby, who was still frowning while tilting her head, but

“Ed” “Edgar-kun” “Edgar-kun”

, I was caught by the three curious adults and it was put off.

Even after that, I was hit by a barrage of questions from those three.

I don’t get tired because of [No Fatigue] and I also had many questions I wanted to ask, so it was time well spent in the end.

——However, only a few hours after this, I came to greatly regret that I didn’t try to hear out more of what Melby had to say this time.

| TOC |

32. Night Assault

The talk of skills with the priest and my parents reached a high, which made everyone (except me) sleep later that day, and these are the events that followed.

The priest had just happened to be troubled over finding lodging, and ended up staying over at our residence that night.

I laid on my bed and carried out my daily routine of expanding my maximum MP.

It had been a one-week trip from Corbette Village, where our estate was, to Fauno City, but it had been surprisingly fulfilling.
I deciphered the fairies' code and proceeded towards the fairy hamlet where I met Melby, and defeated the kidnappers of <Yatagarasu> and rescued the children they had abducted, after which the kidnappers committed suicide. Furthermore, we were attacked by the kidnappers' comrades and turned the tables on them.
Even when we arrived at Fauno City afterwards, I went to the Adventurers' Guild where I met Moria-san and Huffman-san, witnessed the interrogation of the kidnapper, and even underwent a transference, courtesy of the priest, and revealed my status to everyone just earlier.

Because of that, I tended to skip out on the MP expansion as of late.

Recovering after fainting for the nth time, I felt a sense of dissonance.

I looked at Julia-kaasan who was sleeping beside me.

She was making an unusually pained expression.

Mum, who heard about the MP expansion method from me, said that she had decided to quickly exhaust her MP before going to bed from tonight onwards.

……It couldn't be, to be suffering because of this?

Because I was non-standard, it wouldn't be strange for the MP expansion method I know of to have had some kind of side-effect.

I hurriedly used [Appraisal] on Mum.

《Julia Chrebl. Condition: Comatose〔Caused by Repchipa Grass Pollen〕.》

"——!?"

I widened my eyes.

Come to think of it—— A strange fragrance has been around for a while now.
I noticed tiny particles dancing in the moonlight that shone through the window.
[Appraisal].

《Repchipa Grass Pollen: Pollen from the Ivy Plant distributed throughout the northern region of Sonoraat Kingdom and to the north. Has strong hypnotic effects.》

The results are as I imagined.

The residence fell into an eerie silence.
The sense of dissonance I felt when I recovered from fainting just then was because of this.

If this is a poison that uses the vegetation of Northern Sonoraat, the identity of the one who did this is very simple to imagine.

"……Melby?"

"Nn, I'm here."

Even Melby appeared a little sleepy when she showed herself.

"It's also effective on fairies?"

"Uhn…. What is?"

"The poison. The Repchipa Grass Pollen."

"——Eh!?"

Melby woke up immediately.

"……It's true. Someone spread Repchipa Grass Pollen inside the residence.
Ah, it's not effective on me though?
It's just that I had actually been sleeping."

I breathed a small sigh.
This was an uncertain situation, but it seems that some of my tension disappeared after discovering that I wasn't alone.

At the same time, I start to turn my head.

It doesn't seem like the enemy's attack will end with just this.
On the contrary, I should think of this as the enemy's preemptive attack.

"……Melby, can you cure everyone of the poison?"

"Uh uh, that's impossible.
[Fairy's Song] is something that removes any influence caused by magic.
There is someone among the fairies in the fairy hamlet who can use [Compounding], but I think there would be no ingredient in reserve even if we were to fly there now via Gate."

While using [Eavesdropping], I made to leave the room so I could check the situation inside the residence.

At that moment, my ears perceived a noise.

“——Melby!”

“This, right!”

Melby takes out a separation barrier shard from somewhere and hands it to me.

I fling the shard I received towards the window.

Naturally, the shard broke through the window immediately and pierced the face of the man in black trying to infiltrate the room.

“Gugyaa!”

The man fell from the window while screaming.

At the same time,

—— *whoosh whoosh whoosh*……

In the black of night, countless presences appeared.

There were this many!?

This is bad…… As things are now, Dad and the priest, and the others in the residence, are also asleep.

To protect all of them while fighting is impossible.

Fortunately, the most of the presences were currently outside the window—— concentrated by the courtyard.

I leapt out from the window of the room, controlled my descent with [Physics Magic] and landed in the courtyard.

Simultaneously, I invoke the magic symbols I had drawn with both hands.

“ルト——《Flame Lance》!”

I threw the《Flame Lance》towards the shadow of the trees at random.
《Flame Lance》hit the ground and exploded, but I saw the figures of the men in black dodging in a panic.

There——

“Take this!”

While thanking Melby, who was working in sync with me by passing a shard, I throw the shard at the men in black.

“Guah!”

The shard seemed to have hit the target, but it was too dark so I didn’t know where it hit.
I was unsure of whether I defeated them properly but I didn’t have the time to check.

“” ト――《Flame Bit》!””

Two fireballs came flying from the shadows of the trees.

I tumble onto the ground to avoid them.
Thanks to my body corresponding to that of a three-year-old, I was a small target and dodging was easy.

However, because I had fallen to the ground, it became hard to move about.
Because of my three-year-old physique, it was hard to get up once I had fallen……

Perceiving that as a chance, one of the men in black jumped out from the trees and rushed at me.
Grasped in his hand was a jet-black knife.

However, he had let down his guard!

“―― ♭ !”

Using [Physics Magic] I uprooted the majestic stone statue that stood in the courtyard, foundation and all, turning it around to directly hit the man in black.

It was dark so I couldn’t see, but there was a reaction.
The man in black was sent flying, and he seemed to have crashed into the wall of the mansion.

“Don’t underestimate《Baby Scarlet》!”

While shouting that, I made the《Fire Ball》I had produced chantlessly explode in midair inside the courtyard.
There didn’t seem to be any men caught up in the blast, but I was able to confirm what looked like a few shadows with the flash caused by the blaze.

“Here!”

With exquisite timing, Melby promptly released some shards into the air.

I gathered the shards together using ♭ and made my body float in the air at the same time.
Then, from a position overlooking the courtyard, I threw the 5 shards that were floating like beanbags towards the locations of the shadows I had confirmed earlier.

“Uggh!” “Argh!”

It seems a few hit, but the hearing of [Eavesdropping] perceived the sounds of some of the

men in black who seemed to have dodged.
And then a moment later, from the location of the noises, black knives came flying together with the sound of cutting wind.

「♭ ∀ (physik, reflek) ——《Reverse》！」

I used [Physics Magic], which was close to reaching counter stop, and immediately reversed the momentum of the knives.

“Wha-!” “Gyaa!”

I couldn’t confirm it as usual, but I feel like I caught the faint sounds of the enemy when the knives pierced them.

“How’s that! Will the Angels of Yatagarasu lose against a child like me!?”

While boosting the volume of my voice with [Wind Magic], I instigated the men in black with that shout.

Why did I do that?

Of course, it’s to stop them entering the estate.

Because the man in black that Dad had interrogated ——Lucretio(?) seemed to have held a strange pride in being a “messenger”.

Sure enough, the men threw knives at me.

Unlike before, the attacks were aimed at my head and they were filled with killing intent.

However, when compared to Goleth’s throwing spears, this kind of thing was equal to child’s play.

I again return the knives with《Reverse》.

But, as expected, the enemy seemed to have learned and they either avoided or parried the returned knives.

However, I had been predicting this much.

It was delayed because I wasn’t accustomed to it, but I succeeded.

“——《Flame Bit》!”

What I fired was just a《Flame Bit》, an elementary [Fire Magic] spell with a one-symbol invocation.

Unexpectedly, the men in black seemed disappointed and it probably wasn’t just my imagination.

That《Flame Bit》was identical to the usual《Flame Bit》and split the darkness of the night, flying towards the vicinity of where several of the men in black seemed to be hiding.
They didn't even try to avoid it.

However,

"Guwaaa!" "What… is this!?"

The projected《Flame Bit》transformed into a giant ball of fire and engulfed the men.
The two men in black who had half their bodies roasted by the fire tumbled onto the ground to extinguish the flames, but they didn't vanish so easily.

—— It's simple if the trick is revealed.
I fired《Flame Bit》using not the ordinary magic symbol, but its ancient counterpart.

Writing it took a little time but there was a remarkable difference in effect, as could be seen.
The size of the flames was more than five times the original, and the duration was also much longer.

Thanks to the fire continuing to burn for longer, I was finally able to see the situation inside the courtyard.

Corpses of men in black were scattered about throughout the courtyard.

Those with shards stuck in their faces, those with their brains splattered on the walls of the mansion, those whose throats were pierced with the knives I reflected back, etc.

Of course, there were also many men in black who I hadn't killed.
Some of those men were shouldered by their comrades and were trying to escape outside the residence.

I don't want to let them get away if possible, but right now all I can do is try to repel them as best as I can.
Inside the mansion was Julia-kaasan and Alfred-tousan and the others in a comatose and defenseless state.
If those guys regained their composure, the one in trouble would be me.

Nevertheless, the battle here is leaning in my favour.
Even the men in black who seem to still possess fighting spirits appear to be wavering between fighting or retreating.

But naturally, I don't have even a hint of obligation to wait for their decision.
Instead, I should take this as an opportunity to press them and drive them to withdraw.

I draw ﾉﾚ and ﾄ in the air to fire a《Flame Lance》——

"——Let's have you stop there."

Suddenly, a man's voice came interrupting.

Furthermore,

——From behind!?

I turn around in a panic.

Bang A piercing noise sounded, and the back door to the mansion was blown off.

Appearing from inside was——

"From back then……"

"Oh, so you remember."

It was the ominous man who had called out to one of our servants yesterday on our way home from the knights' guardroom where the <Yatagarasu> member was being imprisoned.
If I remember correctly, he called himself a messenger from the servant (Marcella-san's) home.

Illuminated by the flames produced by the ancient magic symbol which still remained in the courtyard, the man's face was exposed.
With finely chiselled features, he was a man in his forties.
Muscular with a tall stature, and dull reddish-brown hair combed back.
His entire body, from his shoulder to his feet, was covered with a jet-black robe, but the aura he exuded was more like a warrior than a mage.

And,

The man was carrying a girl in a maid outfit in his bared arms.

It was Steph.
Even at such a time, she was happily drooling as she slept.
When I promptly use [Appraisal],

《Stephanie. Condition: Asleep.》

She wasn't in a coma?
I reflexively made a puzzled expression.

"This fellow was sleeping in the stables for some reason.
Because Repchipa Grass Pollen is quite valuable, they tried to spread sufficient amounts around the mansion and didn't reach the stables.
I thought it'd be better to kill her back at the stables, but she showed no signs of waking up even when the shooting started.
Then, I thought she might be useful as a hostage so I brought her with me."

Steph likes animals.

I'm sure she said something like "the horsies are so soft~!" and fell asleep while she was playing with the horses.
She was able to escape the influence of the Repchipa Grass because of that, but I don't know if her luck was good or bad.

I stay silent and scowl at the man.

There, I heard Melby whisper.

"Now what? Should I do something?"

"……Can you?"

If I recall correctly, weren't fairies unable to harm humans?

"——I can if it's that man.."

At Melby's words, I used [Appraisal], taking extra care so the man wouldn't be suspicious.

I briefly opened my eyes widely.

——So that's it.

"……Hey you bastard, why're you looking at me with such a creepy look.
Stop that now."

The man glowers at me.

As expected, him noticing my [Appraisal] last time when he left was just a coincidence.
However, with just "creepy", I didn't know what he would do.

"Tch, why's the biggest nuisance not asleep.
The dosage was a failure."

While glaring at the grumbling man, I turn my head in haste.

"……why did you take a hostage?"

"Huh?"

"Isn't your goal to seal our lips?
If you intended to kill everyone anyway, there's no way you were listening to orders when you took her hostage."

Hearing my words, the man grinned.

"Ah, you're mistaken.
The reason we're here isn't to annihilate you all.
If that were the case, we wouldn't have used such tepid measures as scattering Repchipa

Grass.
Scattering a lethal poison, setting the estate on fire after putting everyone to sleep, there were other means to use if we were just trying to kill you.”

The man says, as though implying that they would have done so if they had been inclined to.

“……Then, what is your goal? Money?”

“Sorry, but we’re not lacking funds.
As long as there are people in this world, there will be no shortage of people who’d pay us to eliminate someone.”

While the man spoke, the other men in black also arranged themselves, surrounding me.

“Don’cha understand?
I guess you don’t understand.
The reason I —— <Yatagarasu> leader, Gazaine Müntzer (ガゼイン・ミュンツァー) came here is ——”

“……The reason is?”

“——It’s so we can kidnap you, Edgar Chrebl.”

---

33. Willing Kidnapping (Firebird)

I take my time and digest the words of the leader of 〈Yatagarasu〉, Gazaine Müntzer.

Then,

“….ha?”

I unintentionally let out a dumbfounded voice.

“Like I said, we want you, you see.”

“…..pedophilia?”

“Who are you calling a pedo. Damn, what the hell have you been taught.”

“I would like you to stop bad-mouthing my parents.”

“Then don’t say weird things.”

“……”

I seem to be at a disadvantage.

After thinking it through again, I ask once more.

“What do you intend to do after kidnapping me?”

“——I will raise you.”

“…….huh?”

“I will raise you. As a first-rate assassin.
——Oy, you lot, come out.”

Due to the man—— Gazaine’s words, a number of black-clad people emerge from inside the mansion.

Those black-clad people uniformly have a short stature.

No, that’s not it.

[Appraise].

《Beck：〈Yatagarasu〉Member of the 1st Group. Age: 8 years old. Level 15.》
《Miguel：〈Yatagarasu〉Member of the 1st Group. Age: 9 years old. Level 19.》
《Eremia：〈Yatagarasu〉Member of the Specialist Group. Age: 7 years old. Level 21.》
《Donna：〈Yatagarasu〉Member of the 1st Group. Age: 11 years old. Level 18.》

They are ——all children.

Not like I'm the one to say, with me being 8 months old and all, but they are just children with most of them not even 10 years old.
With their bodies wrapped in black clothes and knife in their hand, the children line up behind Gazaine with brisk movements.

"I see….. So the reason why you abducted those children was to make assassins out of them."

"Pfu. Don't make it sound that bad.
I only just educated them.
I taught them happiness of accepting the teachings of the Great Glutometsa-sama, who is a prophet that receives the supreme will of the Evil God Monguenes-sama, and living together with that sacred duty.
——Isn't that right?"

"Yes! We are proud emissaries! We are sacred apostles who kill the devils on behalf of Monguenes-sama!"

The girl with the highest Level said this.

"So this is it, Edgar-kun.
We will have you become an apostle of 〈Yatagarasu〉.
Be proud that you will be able to work for the sake of the Great Evil God-sama."

"….and if I say I don't want to?"

"You are bright, so you already know, don't you?
We could've used lethal poison instead of Repchipa.
Nah, even now I could order the bunch here and have everyone killed in the mansion.
Even if by some chance you manage to defeat everyone here, either your father or mother will no doubt be dead by then.
Even before that, at the least the neck of this soundly sleeping missy could be neatly broken in a few seconds, right? In some kind of accident, you see."

"……"

I grimly stare at Gazaine, but he just keeps telling his ludicrous story like he isn't concerned at all.

"If you are reluctant to the end, then there is no helpin' it.
We can't help but do this to settle things.
The compassionate Evil God-sama will perhaps forgive you, but we as a religious organization can't just overlook the guy that dealt a serious blow to us like that.
Even if that is a not even 1 year old brat……no, exactly because of that it would be bad for the almighty 〈Yatagarasu〉 if we don't make you as miserable as possible.

—— So, how is it, Edgar-kun.
Won't you become our comrade for the sake of your papa and mama?
You are too young by our standards, but it's not like there is no precedent for that either.
We can raise you up to be a splendid holy warrior?
But then, as one would expect, you are the first one with such an outstanding talent that can easily turn the tables on our subordinates.
I guess the《Baby Scarlet》nickname is not just for show, huh.
Haha. Interesting. I really look forward to your future prospects."

"…….I might kill you in your sleep?"

"If you can, then do that.
The greatest assassin should be at the top of an assassin organization, right?
That's also how I got hold of this position."

"That is very adherent of you."

I think for a bit.

This time the inhabitants of the mansion were easily made to sleep with a pollen.
They probably have a collaborator among those that can get into the mansion.
I don't even have to say that Marcella-san, who was meeting with Gazaine, is suspicious.

However, most likely Marcella-san is threatened by these people.
They probably got ahold of a weakness of hers or took her family hostage.
These people have the ability and the nerve to do something like that without anyone noticing.
In other words, even if we accept our losses this time and raise the level of vigilance around the mansion, there is a high chance that they can do the same thing again and use some kind of drug or come up with a plan to assassinate us.

Of course, mom would be able to repel a run-of-the-mill assassin.
Dad also has the ability to win a complete victory against a few black-clad people.

But no matter if it's the《Flame Prison Witch》or the master of [Spearmanship], they can't exhibit those skills if they are forced into a coma by a sleeping drug.
If they aren't afraid to use any means, then they should be able to kill much easier by scattering poison instead of a sleeping drug.

——In other words, it was already checkmate when I became their target.

"If I come with you, then you won't do anything to the people inside, right?"

"I will promise you that.
For us the nobles are good customers.
Killing nobles is not something we do unless there's a lot of money involved.
We won't deliberately do things that would chase away customers.
It would cause too much of a fuss if the family of Viscount Chrebl with those recent military

exploits got massacred.”

“The drug you used on the people inside, is it harmless?”

“The effect should wear off by morning. Although a mild headache may remain.”

“You took the family of one of the inhabitants hostage, right?
You will release them properly, right?”

When I asked that Gazaine opened his eyes wide.

“Fu…….hahaha! You are really one helluva kid.
Of course we will release them.
We kill those that should be killed, we don’t kill those that don’t need to be killed.
That is the law of an assassin organization.”

If they don’t have a law like that, then an assassin organization would just end up with an internal discord in no time, Gazaine said.

I guess that’s true.
Professional killers are gathered together, so it would be bad if there is nothing to keep them in check.
Otherwise there is no guarantee that a battle between assassins won’t start from even the smallest disagreements.

That’s why, in place of that, as a way of venting it’s allowed to plot the assassination of the Leader.
However, if they fail they are killed.
Only if they risk their lives to kill the leader can they succeed the role of the leader.

I see, it’s well thought out.

I said this while letting out a sigh.

“I got it……all I can do is go with you.”

There is one more reason why I decided on this.
That is——

《Gazaine Müntzer (Religious Assassin Organization〈Yatagarasu〉Leader/Religious Organization Instructor,《Mosquito》,《Hazy Moon》,《Closer(Certain killer)》,《Religious Assassin Organization》)
37 years old

Level 55
HP 140/140
MP 439/439 (39+400)
Condition

Deal with the Evil God (Due to the Deal with the Evil God Monguenes, powerful bonuses have been gained. Terms and conditions: Raise 100 children into assassins until the deadline and make them each kill at least 5 people. Degree of completion: 89/100, Deadline: 3 months 24 days until.)

Skills
Legendary class
＋[Sense Danger] 9 (MAX) (Allows sensing the signs of all kinds of dangers and things that lead to danger)
＋[Illusion Magic+1] 9 (MAX) (Project the imagined scene to the mind of the targets. Illusions are able to incite certain emotions. Depending on the Level and the amount of MP used, the illusion can be shown to more people. Due to the Deal with Evil God, the effect of [Letterless Invocation] 9 is constantly applied.)

Master class
[Discern] 6
[Assassination Techniques] 6
[Throwing Techniques] 4
[Stealth Techniques] 3
[Detect Presence] 2

General
[Assassination Skills] 9 (MAX)
[Stealthy Steps] 7
[Unarmed Combat Techniques] 7
[Dagger Techniques] 7
[Shuriken Techniques] 7
[Knife Throwing] 7
[Keen Hearing] 5
[Steel Thread Techniques] 5
[Command] 5
[Jump] 5
[Night Vision] 4
[Darkness Magic] 4
[Sword Techniques] 3
[Fire Magic] 3
[Farsight] 2
[Bow Techniques] 2
[Pharmacist] 1
[Tool Creation] 1
》

The result from [Appraise] from just now.

Like Melby said, this guy is an apostle of the Evil God.
No, maybe he can’t be called an apostle, but there is no mistake that he is deeply connected.

If that's the case then they are my and the Goddess-sama's enemies.
Sooner or later, I would have to settle things with them.
In that case, it's best if I deal with them before their victims further increase.

——That's why, I decided.

I will infiltrate their interior, then I will extract every single bit of information or material they have.
And after that, I will catch that Archbishop of theirs and completely, thoroughly annihilate them.
I'll have to make you deeply regret making a move on my family……!

But, this is not yet the time to show my anger.
Let's calm down.
Remember the time when I was pissed off by my fighting game opponents.
All getting angry did was it made my movements dull and allowed the opponent to take advantage of it, right?

I pretend that nothing is wrong and say to Gazaine.

"I can at least leave a farewell letter, right?"

"……knock yourself out.
It will be found out that this was done by〈Yatagarasu〉anyway."

I wrote up the letter under the surveillance of Gazaine.

The contents are like this.

『Dear dad and mom,

It's Edgar.
It's sudden, but I decided to get kidnapped by the Religious Assassin Organization 〈Yatagarasu〉……
They told me if I didn't listen to them they would kill everyone is the house, so all I can do is obey.
They are people that managed to drug us easily. Even if they are repelled this time, they would plot against us in the future for sure. And sadly I'm not sure if we can get rid of them with our capabilities.
They said they want to make a professional assassin out of me, so they probably won't kill me anytime soon.
One day, I will return to your side without fail.

From Edgar.』

I show the letter I wrote to Gazaine.

"Kuku……you are showing me this, huh.

Damn, you brat got some thick nerves.”

Even as he is laughing sarcastically, the leader doesn’t tell me to change the farewell letter.

——So this is how I became the captive of the Religious Assassin Organization 〈Yatagarasu〉.

| TOC |

34. Sin Examination

"——Head in, No. 15."

One of the men in black said arrogantly, pointing past a heavy metal door with his chin.

"……What's this room?"

I asked, but the man doesn't move as though he didn't even hear my question.

I reluctantly looked towards Gazaine behind me.

"Don't worry. It's not like we're going to lock you inside an isolation cell."

"……But no matter how you look at it, this is an isolation cell."

That room was the inside of a stone cell, located deep underground.
It was around the size of four and a half tatami mats (2.73m2), but there were no windows and the ceiling was pointlessly high.
Above the ceiling there was a barred skylight, but it's hard to call that a window.
Aside from that, if you looked closely you could see some round holes in the walls, but they were smaller than a grown man's fist.
Although I had a lot of doubts, this solid stone room would normally be considered an isolation cell.
And it was the type that people who have committed a heinous or political crime would be locked up in.

"What, are you scared,《Baby Scarlet》?"

"……I just have to go in, right?"

When I enter the cell, the door was closed and barred from the outside as I expected.

"……Melby, are you there?"

"I'm here. Don't worry."

Melby said when I asked with some unease, and she caressed my head while remaining invisible.
As expected of everybody's big sister.

—— Five days have passed since I was kidnapped from the Viscount Chrebl estate in Fauno City.

During this time, I was surrounded by the leader and the other gloomy troops dressed in black , and they watched me closely as we walked on an off-road path in the forest.

I would occasionally feign tiredness to take breaks, as I thought of trying to confirm my

location, but not only was the path very crooked, the important thing was that I was blindfolded so I could only tell that we were heading roughly west of Fauno City.

But then again, Melby who remained by my side whilst invisible (or should have been) could see our surroundings without being blindfolded because the evil <Yatagarasu> leaders were unable to see her.
That said, it seems like Melby had never travelled so far away from the Fairy Hamlet so whether she could have grasped our location was doubtful.

But since Melby was there, we could escape through the gate to Fairy Garden at least.
Because of that, I was given great peace of mind.

Now, five days later, we had left the forest, crossed plains, scaled valleys, arriving at something like a crevasse in a cliff wall.
It probably took five days because I, who am less than a year old, frequently requested breaks and the men in black purposefully taking us on a lot of detours to hide the path to this location.

The men in black jumped into the crevasse without any equipment.
The leader, Gazaine, asked,

"——Do you need someone to carry you?"

but I ignored his question and threw myself into the hole.
I write ♭ (physik) in mid air and fell gently, winking at the black-clad children staring in wonder as I landed.

At the bottom of the crevasse was a space the size of a gymnasium from my previous world.
Left at one end, there was a bogie with a metal seesaw on top.
I wondered what it was, but then I looked closer and saw tracks laid out under the bogie.
Which means, this is that.
A rail car that moves by pushing the seesaw alternately up and down.

Next to the rail car, there was a cleverly hidden small hole.
Heading to that hole, one of the men in black knocks his knives against each other in a steady rhythm.

Gotogotogoto……

A dull noise reverberated from far away.

"——Get on."

Gazaine says, and I got on the cart without really knowing why.
Aside from Gazaine and I, two other men in black got on the cart.
The two men in black start pumping the seesaw in alternation, propelling the cart forward.

“Ooh.”

“Hmph……acting like a brat for something like this.”

Gazaine scoffed at me, who was genuinely moved.
The cart passes by multiple junctions and arrived at yet another gymnasium-sized area.
I realised it when we passed the junctions, but that signal with the knives was probably a sign to switch the tracks.
If you didn’t do that then you would probably end up at somewhere else or, in the worst case, you might even end up taking a dive off some open pitfall.

This space, unlike the last one, had some metal doors lined up.
At the centre there was an excessively solid-looking small door with regular-sized doors spaced a fair distance to the left and right of it.
The regular sized doors were left open, with stairs visible inside.

I was taken to the door in the centre—— which leads us to the scene at the start.

“Oi……oi!”
I attempt to yell out from the isolation cell(?) but there was no response.

“What are you trying to do……”

Since there’s nothing else to do, I sit down in the centre of the cell.
The corner is dark, so it’s not like I can tell what was there.

……Wait, if it’s dark, I just have to light it up.

“∩(Light)”

I create light, then survey the rest of the inside of the cell.

But all I could tell was that it was a uselessly cleanly carved air space in a stone.

I wonder if the randomly scattered holes in the walls are air holes.
But there seems to be too many of them if that’s the case.

I attempt to investigate the wall, moving ∩(Light) over to it but then,

“…… ∃ (Erase)”

A voice sounds from the hole in the wall and my ∩(Light) was erased.

In the cell where darkness has fallen again,

“I see……so they were voicepipes.”

I nod as if I’ve solved one mystery.

"Oi, I know you're listening. Why are you doing this?"

As expected, no response comes.
I waited a few minutes, but no sign of something happening comes.

"……Then, what to do…?"

I say to myself, thinking.

——Then,

"……I guess I'll raise my skills."

If they don't plan on doing anything, I'm not going to gain anything by just waiting.

I stand back up, immersing myself in skill leveling.

There are a few choices I want to try.

First is the standard, raising my maximum MP, but fainting is something I want to avoid in a situation like this, so it's rejected.

Next is leveling [Eavesdropping].
Actually I'm already doing it but since the walls of this room are really thick, I can barely hear anything from outside the walls.

Aside from those, I want to try to acquire that skill Gazaine had, [Night Vision].
Fortunately, I've been carefully straining my eyes since it's dark in here but I have yet to obtain it.

There's also [Spirit Magic] which requires the practice of "trying to hear the voices of spirits" that I still haven't managed to succeed at.

In other words, even though I'm trapped in a dark, cramped room, I've got an infinite amount of things to do so I won't end up getting bored.

If it seems like I'm really going to be locked in here forever, I can ask Melby to open a gate to the Fairy Hamlet, and begin working on peeling off the barrier surrounding the Pioneer Elf.
But then again, I'm probably being watched so I can't just suddenly disappear.

——And, like that, half a day passed by with nothing happening.

While I will say that I'm glad I had plenty of time to level up my skills, it doesn't make sense that nothing has happened until now.

Also, now that I think about it, I'm starting to get hungry.
Since I can just ask Melby to give me some berries and fruits for a snack, I'm not that worried about it.

But if I was a normal child, it would probably be about time to start crying “Let me out!”.

When I thought that, I suddenly hear a voice.

“——Remember……when was the first time you sinned?”

“…….Huh?”

To the sudden voice, I let out a stupefied voice.

“——Remember……when was the first time you sinned?”

The voice repeats its words.

“Well, what I want to say is even if you ask me so suddenly……”

“——Remember……when was the first time you sinned?”

Without answering me, the voice stubbornly repeats its words.

“Why are you asking this?”

“——Remember……when was the first time you sinned?”

“It has already been half a day since I was locked in here. Gimme food.”

“——Remember……when was the first time you sinned?”

“Then let me go to the toilet. I’ve been really needing to go for a while now.”

“——Remember……when was the first time you sinned?”

“You’re too persistent. Actually, what are you?”

“——I am a ghost. Remember……when was the first time you sinned?”

Oh, there was a slight variation.

After that I tried asking a bunch of things but that was the only time the response changed.

At this time, I never thought that something like that would happen.

——That I would end up stuck with this self-proclaimed ghost-kun for two weeks.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

——A week has passed since then.

“——Remember (etc.)”

While I ignore the endlessly repeating words, I attempt to listen for the voices of the spirits.

Melby, who is flying next to me says,

“In a place like this, an earth spirit would be good. The voices of earth spirits vary pretty greatly depending on the time and place, but since there is a lot of stone here, there should be the sound of different minerals hitting each other, making a grinding-like noise. Their channel of consciousness will be on a much lower frequency. Well, some mineral spirits reside on a much higher channel though.”

I don’t really understand this “channel” thing.

“——Remember (etc.)”

Even when I ask Melby quietly as to not alert the others,

“There’s no other way to describe it. Fairies understand it since birth, so I can’t really explain it well.”

She says, giving a completely useless response.

“Or rather, if you’re going to try to hide your voice, why don’t you just learn [Telepathic Communication]? Since I also know it, we should be able to communicate both ways.”

“There was also that method, wasn’t there.”

“——Remember (etc.)”

After that, it became Melby-sensei’s [Telepathic Communication] class.

“Now, focus on me. From there, try to match the wavelength of my magic. Since I’m a being born from magic, it should be easy.”

I focus deeply.

I stare singlemindedly.

Around an hour passed, I think.

I think I’ve somewhat come to understand that “wavelength” Melby talked about.

“Yes, like that! And now, don’t lose that wavelength and gently pull it in.”

“Like this? Ah, I let it go……”

“——Remember (etc.)”

For another three continuous hours of practice since then, finally, I’m able to somehow hold the “wavelength” for a period of time.

I understand the feeling of pulling it in, albeit vaguely.

"Somehow, I'm getting tired even though I'm just keeping you company. Ah, do you want to eat some nuts?"

"Okay."

I receive and eat a nut that resembles an acorn.

I break the shell with a *snap*, and delicious juice pours out from inside.
Yeah, delicious.

"——Remember (etc.)"

Melby says she's tired and falls asleep.
Now that I think about it, it's probably around night outside now.

Then I guess I'll level [Night Vision].
Wait, if it's night then it's not strange to be sleeping.
Or rather, if it doesn't look like I'm sleeping somewhere then it will be strange.
If that's the case, then I'll feign sleeping while raising my MP.

"——Remember (etc.)"

Like that, I pass the night and when Melby wakes up, I resume [Telepathic Communication] practice.
After half a day passes, I finally grasp the feeling of pulling it in.
Melby's voice keeps on breaking up, but I've come to be able to hear it.
It seems like I'm getting close to acquiring it.

"——Remember (etc.)"

This happened soon after Melby muttered "It's almost midday".
The bottom of the door is pulled out roughly, and instead a tray of food is pushed in.
On today's menu is bread and thin soup.
I finish eating in no time.
When I leave the tray at the bottom of the door, it's immediately pulled out.
It seems like I'm under proper surveillance.

"——Remember (etc.)"

While eating, the voice in the sky was the same as always.
Since it's gone on this long, it's about time I figure out this "ghost"-san's intentions.

Scaring a kid by throwing them in a dark, cramped space, making them eat only the minimum amount; having a voice in the way so they can't sleep, it's probably a tactic to exploit their weakened mental state with brainwashing.
So that would mean, I should pretend to be brainwashed here or there'll be no end to it?

Well, there are a few skills I still want to level, so it's fine even if it's like this for a while.

By the way, there is a hole in the corner of the room that I've been using as a toilet.
Since I don't want the smell to stay here, I washed it away with π(Aqua) but, as expected, there was no need to use ∃(Erase).

Or rather, I wonder if ∃(Erase)-using magic users are constantly on standby outside this cell.
How troublesome.
……hm? I can probably use this to level skills.

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35. Improving Speech (Firebird)

——After that, another week had passed.

『——Remember……When was the first time you have committed a sin?』

Recently, I've grown so accustomed to the voice of the ghost that if I don't intentionally pay attention it gets filtered out and I forget the fact that the ghost is speaking.

Well then, let's announce the results of the 2 weeks long skill raising.

Don.

《Edgar Chrebl
Level 32
HP 67/67（4↑）
MP 2594/2594（452↑）

Skills
・Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

・Legendary class
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –
[Telepathic Communication] 1 (NEW!)

・Master class
[Physical Magic] 8
[Enchant Magic] 3
[Mana Control] 6
[Letterless Invocation] 6
[Magic Language] 1

・General
[Throwing Spear Techniques] 5
[Flying Sword Techniques] 2
[Shuriken Techniques] 6 (↑1)
[Throwing Axe Techniques] 2
[Knife Throwing] 2
[Fire Magic] 8 (↑1)
[Water Magic] 2
[Wind Magic] 6
[Earth Magic] 2
[Light Magic] 5 (↑2)
[Telekinesis Magic] 9 (MAX)

[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Simultaneous Invocation] 9 (MAX)
[Mana Perception] 3 (↑2，MAX)
[Cryptanalysis] 2
[Keen Hearing] 7 (↑4)
[Farsight] 2
[Night Vision] 7 (NEW!)

《Blessing of a Benevolent God +1》
》

I managed to learn [Night Vision] and [Telepathic Communication] without problems, which were my objectives this time.
Because it's dark in here and I kept using [Night Vision] the whole time the Skill level had risen by a lot.

Also, although there is no way I can verify this, but [Night Vision] is probably a Skill that needs a lot of concentration, so I think an ordinary person would be very fatigued if he kept using it continuously for 30 minutes.
I kept using that kind of Skill the whole time, so it's no wonder it went up quickly.
Same reason with [Keen Hearing], I'm also managing to raise its Skills level quite fast.

The reason why [Light Magic] went up was because, from time to time, I produced a ∩ (Light) to grasp the capabilities of the mage on standby.
Thanks to that I managed to grasp how to adjust the ∩ (Light) , so I learned how to create lights that can't be easily negated because of their composition, or just the opposite, a light that explodes in an instant.

My level went up as a result of the battle in Fauno City.
On the way here at night, when my surroundings calmed down I was assailed by a Growth Sleep.
That being said, in my case it's done in 10 minutes.

『——Remember……When was the first time you have committed a sin?』

The ghost is the same as always, he keeps repeating the same thing over and over again.
If I concentrate on listening to it, although they imitate each other well, I can tell that after a certain period of time the voice changes to a different one.
In other words, they've put together a rotation for the role of the ghost, and they are broadcasting the voice of the ghost continuously for all 24 hours.
Furthermore, there is only one line.
If my previous self was asked 'I will pay you good, so will you do it?', I would've most likely said no.

Then I suddenly realize.

『——Remember……When was the first time you have committed a sin?』

…..Wouldn't this become quite a nice language study material?

Maybe I should focus on solidifying my still dicey enunciation.

『——Remember……When was the first time you have committed a sin?』

"Rem*ember*……When was the *first time you* have *committed* a *sin*?"

『——!!』

Rumble rumble, some sounds could be heard from the other side of the speaking tubes.

I, on the other hand, am thinking that my enunciation is still dicey.
They say that Japanese people can't differentiate between L and R, but in Marquekt Common Language, surprisingly, there are two consonants that correspond to the L in the english language.
Furthermore, those two have completely different meanings as magic letters, so I need to become able to differentiate between them for sure, so I can build Magic Phrases in the future.

Well then, while I was thinking that, apparently they managed to reorganize themselves on the other side of the speaking tube.

『——Remember……When was the first time you have committed a sin?』

Repeat after me.

"Remember……When was the *first time you* have *committed* a *sin*?"

『——Remember……When was the first time you have committed a sin?』

"Remember……When was the first time *you* have *committed* a *sin*?"

『——Remember……When was the first time you have committed a sin?』

"Remember……When was the *first time you* have *committed* a sin?"

『——Remember……When was the first tch…..』

Ah, he fumbled.
I guess ghosts have tongues too.

『……Remember……When was the first time you have committed a sin?』

The ghost continues like nothing happened.

"Remember——"

『Remember——』

This strange Round[1] with the ghost and I continued on for another half a day.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

“Remember……When was the first time you have committed a sin?”

Oh! Wasn’t that one perfect just now?

Half a day had passed since then, after I consumed the provision consisting of dry and crumbling bread and almost flavorless soup, I think I managed to grasp the trick behind the enunciation.

It probably wasn’t in response to that, but

『——Then I ask. What was the first sin you have committed…..?』

Some variation emerged in the lines of the ghost.

Without delay, I start the shadowing in high spirits.

“Then I ask, what——”

『……! I’m the one asking!
Damn creepy-ass kid!
I’ll go and murder his ass right now!』

『H-hey! Don’t say things that are not in the script!』

You shouldn’t say script either.

For a while, clattering sounds continued.

Then, like nothing happened,

『——Pfuu. Then I ask. What was the first sin you have committed…..?』

He repeats the line.

Exhaustion can be felt from the sigh at the beginning.
Of course, it’s a different ghost from the one that flipped out just now.

I feel that my enunciation got much better, so I think I will answer now.

“——The first sin I’ve committed was that I buried my head in the boobs of my maid, Steph, and snuggly-snuggly-d them.”

『……!! Gu-…..kuku-…..』

He must be surprised to hear a reply, and also—— the latter part should be him trying to

hold back either his anger or his laughter.

『——The first sin you have committed was doing improper things to the bo-, breasts of your maid.』

Ah, he hesitated to say it.
Surprisingly innocent, this ghost.

"No, that's not it. The first sin I've committed was that I buried my head in the boobs of my maid, Steph, and snuggly-snuggly-d them."

『……Gu-……This damn brat……』

Oi, I heard that.

『The first sin you have committed was doing an improper deed to your maid.』

"Why do you change the expression.
Like I said, the first sin I've committed was that I buried my head in the boobs of my maid, Steph, and snuggly-snuggly-d them.
Also, I'm just a baby, so it's not improper."

『……The first sin you have committed was fornication』

"Pfu. Fornication you say.
What period do you come from, huh?"

『This damned braaaaat——!!』

The sound of running down the stairs can be heard together with the angry voice, then right after that, *bang bang,* the door of the isolation cell was vigorously pummeled.
As one would expect from someone that trained as an assassin, those were some powerful front kicks.

『Getting carried away even when people put up with your shit! I will kill you, I will murder you, you hear!』

Bang bang.
It looks like there is speaking tube in front of the door of the room, so the angry voice from the other side can be heard perfectly.

『Oi, stop it!』
『Someone help here!』
『Bring some pollen of Repchipa!』
『Medic Squad! Medic Squad!』

At least do it after closing the speaking tube.

『——Oi, what's with the commotion?』

Oh, here comes the Leader.

At the same time a clanking sound can be heard, then the voices became inaudible.
They must've closed the speaking tube.

For a while, silence fell to the isolation cell.
It's been a while since I didn't hear the voice of the ghost.
It's been so long, that it somehow feels weird to not hear the voice of the ghost.

Gahaha, a hearty laugh reached my [Keen Hearing].

Clank.

『——Oi brat, it looks like you did some amusing things.
It's become clear that you are not someone that would be affected by something like this.
——Oi, get this brat out of the Sin Examination Room.』

『Eh….? B-but! Please give me one more week! I will certainly bring this damn conceited brat to his knees!』

『Stop it, it's useless.
You said the same thing last time, that's why I extended it another week.
Any more than this and his body would break instead.
If it breaks after he becomes an assassin then it's one thing, but if his body breaks at this stage, then the guys that were killed by him would become a complete loss.』

『B-but…..!』

『What was with that commotion just now anyway.
The ones who are mentally driven into a corner are more like you guys.』

『Kh……』

After a while, the door of the isolation cell (Sin Examination Room?) opened.

"Number 15, come out"

I think this voice was one of the ghosts.

I come out of the isolation cell like I was asked.

When I did——

"Congratulation!"

The hooded black-clad men are smiling and welcoming me with an applause.

"Come, now with this you are also a member of 〈Yatagarasu〉.
The numerous sins you have committed until now have been forgiven and you have been

reborn as a holy emissary of Evil God-sama.”

“……sins I’ve committed, you say, the boobs of my maid, Steph——”

“Come, with this you are now free!
You can eat anything you like from all the things you see here.
Eat all you want with gratitude to Evil God-sama!”

Drowning out my words, the host person said.
……Looking at him properly, the veins on his forehead are popping out.

The space in front of the isolation cell became a small banquet.

Delicious looking bread, meats, fishes, and soups are lined up.

I naturally drew closer to those and started devouring them.

…..Right, well, since Melby shared some of her snacks with me I wasn’t that famished, but I…….thought it would be best to make them think that.

——Like this, the two week long Sin Examination has ended.

……Thanks to that, I guess I can’t say that my own sinfulness didn’t leave a deep impression in me.

| TOC |

36. A day in the life of the Newbie Emissary Orochi-kun (Morning ~ Noon)

——One month has passed since the Sin Examination

"Hey~ Fellow believer Orochi! Give us a hand over here too!"

The field supervisor's bold voice resounded through the excavation site on the 5th basement floor of the <Yatagarasu> hideout, a.k.a. the "Crow's Nest".

"Got it! I'll come when I'm done with this!"

I, the one called Orochi, replied as I dug a round pit in the ground using [Earth Spirit Magic].

……I suppose an explanation is needed.

Having become an emissary apprentice of <Yatagarasu>, I received the name of "Orochi" from the leader.
The pretext behind the christening was because I was as creepy as a snake.

Apparently, when the title of apprentice is removed and one is acknowledged as a full-fledged emissary, Archbishop-sama will grant them a different name to use as an emissary.
Just like those fish that are called different names as they grow larger.

At this time, they can return to having the original name given by their parents if they wish.
To be more accurate, Archbishop-sama would christen them with the same name once again.
……It means they have approval from Archbishop-sama for them to call themselves by their original name.

And I, who is expected to be able to use magic, am forced to participate in excavating the historic relics that lay sleeping on the lower floors of the nest during my break from training.

I am told that this nest seems to be reusing (arbitrarily) the remnants left by ancient mages.
It seems historic relics that differed to these remnants were discovered when they were digging out the basement using [Earth Magic] and expanding the space to match the scale of the religious organisation.
The remnants so far were merely tunnel-like grottos supported by wooden frames, contrasting with these historic relics which were composed of metal, smooth rock, and a sleek, unidentified structure.

Or rather, to put it bluntly, it was a structure that resembled the office buildings of my former world that were made of concrete, using plastic and light metals.
No, since it's underground, calling it a nuclear bomb shelter might be more fitting.

Anyway, there was a lot of junk lying around inside this office building-like (or nuclear bomb shelter-ish) structure, and I'm not very sure what they were used for.

Although there were quite a few items I recognised, they should all be unfamiliar to <Yatagarasu> ——no, to the people of this world.

However, a few relatively easy to understand objects were also among this.

For example, metal armour and weaponry, including knives.
Stainless steel knives didn't rust easily and were harder to chip than the knives of this world by far, so they were extremely useful for the <Yatagarasu>'s assassins.
Besides that, although few in number, protective gear made of Duralumin according to [Appraisal] was also excavated, and that was apparently what <Yatagarasu>'s upper echelons were wearing under their set of robes.

In addition, aside from those used in the nest, items of any shape and utility imaginable, including stainless steel tableware and plastic containers and such, seem to be jacked up to exorbitant prices and sold to a portion of the dilettantes.

Although my skill level isn't high, I can use [Earth Magic].
I was welcomed at the site because of that, and I was exempted from practice from morning to noon and arranged to work here.
As I continued to use [Earth Magic] here, it eventually reached counter stop.
As a bonus for that, I obtained the Master Class skill [Earth Spirit Magic].

Of course, I wasn't so thoughtless as to use [Earth Spirit Magic] in front of everyone of <Yatagarasu>.
I was more or less using [Earth Spirit Magic] while pretending to use [Earth Magic], labouring as I raised my skills.

—— I also used a few tricks while I was at it, for future visits.

I knocked on the shaved ground and make a small nod at the echoing sound, then I head towards the field supervisor's location.

The field supervisor points at an opening in the wall and says,

"Oh, you've come. About this hole, I thought that if it were you, you would be able to get to the other side and investigate the situation."

This shape is…… a ventilation fan, I suppose.
A yellowish fan had been detached and placed beside the opening.

"Hmmm. Alright."

Drawing ∩ and ♭, I jump through the ventilation fan.

The inside was something like a workroom with matching machinery lined up.
However, they were corroded and worn-out and didn't seem to be very serviceable as they were.

I see components scattered around the machinery —— I narrowed my eyes.

"—— Melby."

"Ye~s. It's okay to just collect them?"

"Please. Sorry for always making these kinds of requests these days."

"Making **those** automations may be possible, right?
I'll gladly help."

Melby retrieves the most valuable items with [Dimension Magic].
While I wait for her to finish doing that,

"—— Supervisor, there doesn't seem to be anything important here.
There's a door inside, so I'll try heading that way."

"Is that so, I'll be counting on you."

The supervisor says, not doubting my huge lie.
The fairy-san who hated lies scowled at me, but that was inevitable.

I once again used [Earth Spirit Magic] and removed the earth and sand that covered the door.

To differentiate the earth and sand from the concrete walls and remove only the earth and sand, I'm the only one able to do so among the mages mobilised here.

Or rather, it seems the others are unable to tell apart the rock wall and concrete.
It's as though they think that the concrete is rock that is cut from somewhere, or created and transformed by magic.

Now, when I removed the earth and sand, there was a narrow corridor with metal pipes running through it.
Its design resembles the interior of a submarine or spaceship.
I don't think these historic relics are one gigantic vehicle though.

"Melby, do you know anything about this?"

"Uh uh…… Such a thing doesn't seem to exist in Master's knowledge either."

Melby seemed puzzled, but it's not like I didn't have a hypothesis.

In this world, reincarnators from another world have existed since long ago.
These historic relics were probably made by one of those people.
From its structure, it's a factory or workshop or something.

That said, I can't tell whether these historic relics are that valuable.

The excavation has progressed quite a bit because of <Yatagarasu>'s excavation squad, but it would primarily be daily necessities made of stainless steel and plastic or weapons that were discovered here; there was nothing further to be found.

"There's still the machinery, but whatever."

"Is that okay?
Machines this complex and elaborate and yet with unknown use, it's the first time I've seen them."

"They're certainly unusual, but it's no mystery if there were reincarnators here.
The mysterious thing would be ——"

"……What is it?"

"I can't find the power source making these machines move."

"Power source?"

"Windmills need wind to move, right?
I don't know whether it's electricity or magic, but there's no power source moving the machines."

"Maybe it was already taken away or something?"

"At the least, it doesn't look like it was collected by <Yatagarasu>.
If it was taken away, it was probably the people who made this place and abandoned it."

When I carefully observe the machinery, there are many with round cavities in them.

If these are where the adapters that connect the power source and machinery were, I think it's not electricity but some sort of magical thing.
For example, orbs that store mana.

—— That's what I want.

"A dead end, huh. ——《Tunnel》."

With a *thump* (not the sound, but the ambiance), the wall was hollowed out.
To progress further, I repeatedly used《Tunnel》, aiming for the interior of the historic relics.

Like that, I searched for around 20mins but the desired outcome was not attained.
I turn back to where the supervisor was.
I didn't use the ventilation fan I entered, but dug out the door buried nearby and exited from there.

"—— Oh, so you're back. How was it?"

I put the insignificant junk that I had transported over with [Physics Magic] in a pile in front

of the supervisor who was asking with keen interest.

"Oh, knives and wrenches and…… What's this?
Ah, whatever.
All sorts of seemingly easy to use things have been gathered."

"Inside, there were rail lattices."

The rail car that stretched around the nest interior was also a part of the historic relics.
Both the precise technology and facilities to make the rails wasn't here, but the rails that would occasionally be excavated like this were used for the basement area expansion.

"What! Isn't that a great discovery!?
Especially since the people in the materials squad keep saying they want rails."

The supervisor says, and ruffles my hair roughly.

……Sorry, old man.
The valuable items other than that have all been pocketed.

Well, I think even if I handed them over, a great majority would be items of unknown purpose to you.

Despite harbouring feelings of guilt towards the delighted supervisor, the work of the morning ended there.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

At noon, the dining hall in the middle layer of the Crow's nest was in turmoil.

Even the black-clad emissaries with their sacred duties were human once their masks were removed.
I believe that since they're hungry, they would want to eat delicious things if possible.

"Oi, cook some for me too!"
"Don't cut in! He's cooking mine now!"

In front of the iron plate I was cooking okonomiyaki on, two fellow believers started an argument.
……Ah, "fellow believer" was our way of calling one another in the Nest.

"Fellow believer Nebil, Fellow believer Gonzack, if you don't line up properly, there won't be any okonomiyaki."

When I say that and warn them, the two line up meekly and wait their turn.

Previously, when a similar thing occurred, I used [Physics Magic] to throw the saucepan at the guys who looked down on me thinking I was a kid.
Since then, my senior emissaries have also come to respect my opinions.

Since my appearance was a 3-year-old child, I was watched with strange eyes in the beginning, but they've completely accustomed recently and the people I can crack jokes with have increased as well.

I had thought there would be many fearsome members since it was an assassin's group, but once I entered, a community that could only be called cosy was there.
There were also many amiable emissaries like Fellow believer Nebil and Fellow believer Gonzack, and I was prone to forget that they were assassins who served the Evil God.

"Or rather, you guys could just cook it yourselves."

"No, it differs somehow when we cook it ourselves. The batter isn't fluffy, or rather….."

That's because I was beating it in an exquisite manner with [Physics Magic].
I even grilled the heads of the Ususake mushrooms I was using in place of Katsuobushi with [Fire Magic] to make them crispy.
I also made the staple mayonnaise, and the sauce was specially made using sauce that resembled ketchup with a few condiments added into it.

The dry bread and thin soup provided during the sin examination was, although the portion was small, a typical meal in the Nest.
The meat and fish dishes from when I was released, were luxury items that served as both a welcoming for newcomers and a solace for the emissaries.

When I borrowed the kitchen to make and eat okonomiyaki because the meals had been too dull, I was zeroed in on by the seniors.
After that, I was told to take kitchen duty if I could make such delicious things, discharged from both work and training during lunchtime, and arranged to cook okonomiyaki in the kitchen like this.

It also depends on the day, but there's approximately a hundred emissaries coming in and out of the dining hall.
Our leader, Gazaine, also appears often, but only the figure of the religious organization's archbishop, Glutometsa, have I never seen.

Incidentally, their system is basically that we use the kitchen and cook with whatever there is and eat as we please, since it's not like cafeteria ladies exist.
As far as it goes, the emissaries who have retired due to injury take on kitchen duty and prepare the minimal amount of bread and soup, but it's too wearisome with just that.
There are many emissaries who decide on cooking duty among their cliques and cater for themselves using a rotation system.

To be made to cook for free is unbearable so I've also used that as a bargaining chip.

"Hey, it's been a while so make that too."

Fellow believer Nebil says, consuming the okonomiyaki as though it's truly delicious.

“That? Let’s see, if you replace me for cleaning duty, I’ll do it.
Ah, provide the milk coupon yourself though.”

In the basement, the valuable milk was rationed and one can’t drink it without the specialised coupon.
The milk coupon was a treasure equal to the tobacco coupon in this Nest and it also became a tool used in transactions between fellow emissaries.

The items inside the nest ranged from weapons to food, and as a general rule, was all communal property of the religious organisation itself.
To use the currency that circulated outside the religious organisation to trade was forbidden.
The admirable ones in the religious organisation were, not the guys who possessed money, but those who performed many sacred duties—— in other words, those who have killed many people.
Through performing sacred duties and rising up within the ranks of the religious organisation, one would obtain a good room, earn the authorisation to utilise good arms, and desires would be accommodated for with preferential treatment.

Nevertheless, everyone desires items that are rare after all.
Hence, a rationing system was imposed for some of those goods.
It was an open secret that those tickets were effective as actual currency in the Nest.

By the way, since the milk was directly produced from the exclusive farms located inside the Nest it was rich but fresh with a fine taste. It is a pleasure in the daily lives of the emissaries.

“Ugh…… It can’t be helped.”

Nebil retrieved a wallet from his pocket and handed me the milk coupon stowed away inside.
I passed Nebil the tag for cleaning duty that was known as the red ticket, and brought out a bottle of milk and a stainless steel shaker from the kitchen interior.

“Then, let’s do it ——《Ice Cream》!”

This was, needless to say, my original magic.
Concurrently with using [Physics Magic] to float and swing the shaker about, I cast ⋁ (spread) and ⊦(flame) in a unique form to chill the shaker at the same time.
The explanation is no more than that, but it’s a hard-to-control magic that《Flame Lance》and the like can’t compare to.
Fortunately, mages at that level didn’t exist in the religious organisation, so there was no one surprised about the monstrosity of this magic among the emissaries present here, not to mention Fellow believer Nebil.

Now then, while shaking the shaker, I thinly spread the remains of the okonomiyaki batter on the iron plate.
It’s a little irregular but the substitute crêpe was completed.

I place the crêpe on a plate, and top it with the just-made ice cream.
Then I place alcohol-soaked apples and, since there was no chocolate, dribble a little brandy used for cooking, and then it was finished.

“Here you go, Fellow believer Nebil.”

“Oh, Fellow believer Orochi has a good sense for plating food.
Just where did you learn such an arrangement from.
Even the upper-class noble in the royal capital would have no opportunity to see something like this.”

Nebil asks as he takes the crêpe.
Tutting as I wave my finger,

“You don’t pry into a woman’s past, do you?”

“……Really, where did you learn that from, you brat.”

“If you complain, I won’t make any more okonomiyaki or crêpes.”

“N-no, I was wrong!”

Fellow believer Nebil carried the plate with the crêpe as if it were something important, and left, heading to a table.
I remove my apron as I see him off.

“Oi, make some okonomiyaki for us too, not just Fellow believer Nebil.”
“I would also like a crêpe!”

Other fellow believers say disconcertedly but,

“Sorry, it’s time for training.”

“Wai……it can’t be helped.
Will you make it again?”

“That’s right, we’ll sub for your cleaning, so please make us crêpes.”

“Yes, yes.”

Casually waving my hand, I leave the dining hall.

---

37. A day in the life of the Newbie Emissary Orochi-kun (Noon ~ Evening)

Training begins in the afternoon.

“Now, come at me. Don’t pull your punches.”

I squared off against <Yatagarasu> leader Gazaine in an approximately soccer-court-sized space inside the Nest.

For some reason, I seem to have caught Gazaine’s eye, and he is personally training me during training times.

I throw floating training daggers at Gazaine using [Physics Magic].
——Or rather, I throw 20 simultaneously.

“Fu,——!”

Gazaine easily evades them all, circles behind me in no time at all and presses a knife to my throat.

Damn……Couldn’t see him at all.

“I, I give up……”

“……Hmph. Your magic is first-rate, but your martial skills are lacking.”

The guys watching over our training in the vicinity quietly disagreed, saying, “he’s calling that first rate……?” and such, but it still reaches me with [Keen Hearing].
I’ve already long since leveled [Keen Hearing] to counter stop, yet I could detect Gazaine moving so little that you might as well say that I wasn’t able to detect it at all.
Even with [Keen Hearing]’s counter stop bonus skill [Detect Presence], I could barely even tell that Gazaine had moved.

“I’m not even one yet. It’s inevitable.”

“Oh yeah, that’s right, isn’t it. I get thrown off rhythm when I fight you.
It’s like fighting against a magic-using powerhouse of around thirty years old.
Well, you’re not on the same level as some core fighters in terms of ability, but your instantaneous judgement ability and thinking habits are around that level.

Gulp.

“But contrary to your appearance, it looks like you have a pretty solid build.
You said something like getting bigger because of leveling up, didn’t you.

I don’t know if that’s why, but your body isn’t one of a normal infant’s.”

Heh.
Since a pro at using his body is saying that, it must be right.

“But, it’s strange nevertheless.
Even though I seriously direct my bloodlust at you, you never falter, nor do you seem to get tired.
Even when we spar, you’re strangely tenacious.
Apparently there’s a skill called [Toughness] but you… you have some sort of skill like that too, don’t you?”

“…… Is that so. It’s because of my level.”

I managed to deceive him somehow, but that was bad for my heart.

——That’s right. If I had to say, the mental aspect of [No Fatigue] has stood out more until now, but since coming here my physical strength has been displayed more.

Although it’s a bit late to say this…… I don’t get tired.

In the morning I am roped in to help at the dig site, at noon I’m left in charge of the kitchen; I continue training without a single a break, yet I’ve never fallen into a fatigued condition.

Once at the beginning, I overworked my body and was assaulted by fierce muscle pains after a while.
But that also receded in a few hours.
Since then, I only ever feel a slight discomfort on rare occasions after undergoing strenuous exercise, but not muscle pains.
I rush in and throw knives when I’m instructed to, but my body doesn’t feel like it is on the verge of breaking for being too young.

“Hmph. It won’t even count as training if it’s like this.
Okay, I won’t do anything so come attack at will.
If even one hit lands, you win.
In place of your mother’s breasts, I’ll give you a stack of milk coupons.”

Hearing that, I’m suddenly full of motivation.
A ‘stack’ of milk coupons represents a set of 16.
As a growing boy, I can’t let this opportunity pass.

“Really? I’ll definitely get a hit in……!”

I, as always, continuously throw a large number of knives with [Physics Magic] while moving my left hand behind my back to secretly grab the hidden weapon that I had prepared.

Aiming for the moment Gazaine goes to dodge the knives, I quickly thrust my left arm into the air.

That's——

"Uwo-!? A steel thread!?"

Gazaine yelled out as he dodges the dull shine that shimmered in the air.

"Tch……I thought it would work too."

I click my tongue as I swing my gloved left hand.
The spool of thread was clasp inside the hand with the glove, and the superfine wire is discharged using the tips of my index and middle fingers.
According to [Appraisal], it is

《〔Carbon Steel〕Metal Wire.》

so it's probably something excavated from the ruins.
At the training grounds, there is a great variety of weapons lined up.
Since they are the organisation's belongings, everyone can use them as they please.
Of course, if you take them without permission you will receive harsh punishment, but if you write your name in the 'loan' register and tell one of the officials, you can take the weapon out easily.

Before, I saw that Gazaine had the skill [Steel Thread Techniques] in his status.
I wondered if I could acquire it too and practiced in secret.

……There wasn't any real reason to practice in "secret", but isn't secret training a man's romance?

"Too bad, Orochi.
When did you come to learn that?
I didn't teach you it."

"A girl has her secrets."

"There's no way a girl as uncute as you exists!"

My response to Gazaine's barking was a slash with my steel thread.
I move my fingers agilely, continuing to whip the steel thread around repeatedly, but Gazaine easily sees through the steel thread's trajectory and dodges.
Gazain says with a smile,

"What, is that all? You seem to be really set on this one tactic today."

"Don't give me that. There's still more to come!"

I throw all the knives I am floating with [Physics Magic] towards Gazaine with varied tempos.
Gazaine easily dodges the knives that even I, who threw them, can't predict the trajectories

of, but while that happens I pick up three longswords from the training area's weapon storage with [Physics Magic].

"Take this!"

I reel out the spool of thread, extending the steel thread, encircling Gazaine in all 360 degrees, and tighten it in an instant.
Gazaine dodges this hard-to-evade attack by jumping high from his position, but that leaves him wide open.
I thrust the floating longswords front on at Gazaine, who is in the air.

"——Phew-!"

With a sharp breath, Gazaine waves both of his hands.

It was too fast so I couldn't clearly see it, but it seems like he brushed against the flat of the swords, superbly averting their trajectories.
That's not a move humans can do.

Father Solow spoke ill of my close-combat skills by saying I was "somewhat slow on the uptake," but if I was compared to this nonhuman, then I certainly would look slow on the uptake.

But, with that, Gazaine should have thought that he has staved off my attack.

Aiming for the moment Gazaine loosens his held breath for even a moment, I change the trajectory of the swords.

Well, to be precise, it wasn't a change in trajectory.

I aim the swords that were dancing in the air at Gazaine and simultaneously swing them down.

"——Uwoh-!?"

It seems that this was out of even Gazaine's expectations, as one of the swords grazed his leather vest.

I say to Gazaine who has landed,

"Oi, that was a hit right?"

"Don't kid with me. It only grazed me. That wasn't a valid blow.

"That doesn't count as a blow?"

"A blow is when you deal damage, isn't it."

"Oi oi, what are you saying after the fact, Leader-san?"

“It’s your fault for not properly clarifying the conditions.”

“……ehh. Well, whatever.
If you won’t admit it, I’ll continue until you do.”

I once again combine [Flying Sword Techniques] and [Steel Thread Techniques], and attack incessantly as I please.

But, It won’t hit.
It won’t hit, to the point that I just want to start laughing without thinking.

This… I missed my first and last chance, didn’t I.

——For about an hour after that, I attack Gazaine with [Flying Sword Techniques] and [Steel Thread Techniques] but he dodges them even as sweat drips from his forehead.

“Oi oi, why don’t you get over it!
You know you’re not going to hit!”

Gazaine, who is as expected out of breath, says.

“I never heard anything about a time limit.
It’s your fault for not properly clarifying the conditions, right?”

“But on the contrary, I am the leader of this religious organisation.
I decide the rules around here.
Since it’s been this long and you still haven’t hit me, this match is over.
……Ah, I’m tired.”

Gazaine pours water from the kettle next to the training grounds’ weapon storage into a wooden cup and drinks it in one gulp.

“Damn, what kind of endurance do you have.”

“It’s like this because I haven’t been moving.”

“There’s no way that’s the case!
The only people who could get me this tired are you and Elemia.
Elemia is a genuine genius but……. what the hell are you?
Even though your sense of combat isn’t that great, by the time I notice it, you’ve become outrageously strong.
It’s damn uncanny.”

I unintentionally laugh at Gazaine, who is cursing at me.

“You, what the hell are you laughing at.”

“Well, I just thought it was really fun.”

Right now I can't even get close to beating Gazaine in a spar but, to be honest, it was pretty fun.

Even when playing fighting games in my previous life, I had the most fun when I was fighting against opponents I couldn't beat at all.

On top of the gap in base ability, there's the fact that I have no chance at winning normally at all.
That's why, I schemed a lot of things.
Like fighting according to the book then making an absurd attack that diverged from the template.
I tried suddenly letting loose like a complete amateur.

But, the truly strong guys don't even budge at something of that level.
Reading my every move, then countering with the most optimal action.
In front of such an overwhelming difference in ability, I don't feel the least bit vexed.
All I do is tremble in excitement at the height of the wall I have to climb in front of me.

While there is the grudge I have against Gazaine for coming between our family, I forget about it while we're fighting.
While I still feel bad for Alfred-tousan and Julia-kaasan who should be worrying even now, I have come to enjoy this training.

Gazaine too, leaving aside what he does as leader, he is strangely stoic in regards to fighting and prefers not aiming for weak spots.

According to the person himself,

"——Aiming for weak spots is something that is effective, if done only once.
But if you start to depend on it, then your fundamental ability would cease to grow, wouldn't it."

I got a chance to talk to a pro player who had the experience of being the champion of a world tournament when I stopped by a game centre after a business trip, and he said the exact same thing as Gazaine.

"Hmph, You're about the only one who can take on my grueling training and still be able to say something like that.
Or rather, in this case, it looks more like I'm the one who's taking on grueling training, doesn't it?
I can't keep up with this."

"There you go again. You're saying stuff like that but you're going to be my opponent next time as well, right?"

"I have no choice, do I? There's no one else who can keep up with you after all."

'Tch', he clicks his tongue and turns his back on me.

While leaving, he stopped moving.
Then he turns his head to me, and says:

"——If you've got a problem with my way of doing things, try and kill me."

"……eh?"

"You've got potential.
Perhaps you might even be able to kill me."

"……Do you want to be killed?"

"I've got no intention of getting killed, but……if there isn't at least that level of tension, I get really bored.
That's why I kill people.
People who treasure someone I killed will come to resent me.
Like that, I build up a mountain of resentment, building up the tension.
I can feel like I'm alive."

"……You're mad."

"I know.
If you don't want to be the playtoy of a madman like me, all you have to do is kill me.
People who can't kill me have no right to criticise my way of life."

"What selfish reasoning."

"Say whatever you want.
But say that with the resolve to be killed, alright?
After all, if you're too annoying I'll end up wanting to kill you."

After saying what he wanted to say, Gazaine left while waving his hand.

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38. A day in the life of the Newbie Emissary Orochi-kun (Evening ~ Night) (Firebird)

——Then, at night.

"….and thus, the greedy old woman was eaten by demons. The end."

I was telling some old Japanese folk tales to the Fellow young believers (it's called the child group so girls are also included) in the same kids' room.
Today's subject is Shita-kiri Suzume[1].
Hearing how the greedy old woman who brought the big basket(I rephrased it as an Itembox) back with her suffered a cruel end, the mischievous Miguel shouted 'Serves her right!' and ran around the room.

"…..it's a bit sad that she ended up getting eaten."

That was Donna's opinion.
Donna is a fair-skinned, black-haired beast race girl, who has her hair thinly braided hanging down to her shoulders.
Apparently this way of braiding is a tradition of her tribe that matches her flat ears and it suits her indeed.
Aside from Miguel and Donna, there are many other children in the kids' room.
Their ages range from 5 years old to 11 years old.

The elder group of Miguel, Donna, Beck and Eremia serve as the core.
These four were there at the time of the attack on the Viscount Chrebl mansion.

The gluttonous Beck apparently fell asleep during the story, she doesn't get up from the bed.

Eremia was leaning against the wall in the corner of the room and listened to my story without any particular interest.
Eremia has short-cut, silver colored hair and brown skin, a so-called Dark Elf girl.
At first glance, she is wearing boyish clothes and she herself conducts herself as a boy, but because of her well-proportioned face and figure, she can't be mistaken for one.
She is the youngest of the four, but in ability she far surpasses them.
Among the child group, Eremia is the only one who belongs to the special squad under the direct command of the Leader.

"……oh, did I scare you?
But according to the version I heard she was eaten by demons."

"It's a hag that cut the tongue of a sparrow!?
If there was a divine message then I would kill her myself!"

As a child, Miguel had no mercy in his words.

No, that's not the only thing.

The children here are being trained to kill people.
Because of that, they unconsciously consider killing people as a possible option.

Of course, I myself took the life of many「enemies」since the Ranzrack Fortress.
I don't intend to say anything self-righteous at this point, but hearing children guiltlessly say 'kill' doesn't feel very good.

"——hey, Miguel"

"Say Fellow believer Miguel, Fellow believer Orochi.
Unlike you, I'm already a fully qualified emissary you know?"

Huhunn, Miguel puffs his chest with pride.

Miguel and Eremia are already assigned to the「Sacred Duties」of the religious organization.

In other words, they are performing the killings contracted by the religious organization with their own hands.

Miguel and Eremia believe in the teachings of the religious organization so they believe the things they are doing are their sacred duty without any doubt.

Beck and Donna also finished the training process, received their names back and currently doing the final adjustments in preparation for the sacred duties.
Compared to Miguel and Eremia they have more of a gentle personality, but in the aspect of piety, they are not at all inferior.

"Then, Fellow believer Miguel.
Why is it then we need this collar?"

Saying that, I pointed at the thing coiled around my neck.

There was an inorganic ring with a black luster.

It's something the people of the religious organization call「Necklace of Loyalty」

Its effect is simple, if the other party wants to punish someone, they can activate the collar anytime they want, which then will tighten around the neck.

Loyalty? Far from it, this is a slave collar.

"That is….because we are still young, so we sometimes fall for the temptation of the devils.
They said it's a tool to make us listen to them if that happens….."

"Even though you are a fully qualified emissary?"

"That is something Archbishop-sama decided.
All we have to do is kill who they say."

It seems Miguel abandoned thinking about it at that point.

“Have you met Archbishop-sama yet?
I haven’t even once seen him since I got here.”

“Met, you say……Founder-sama is, how do I say it, isn’t someone you can just lightheartedly meet. His existence is in different phase(?) from us or something, is what I heard…..”

Miguel is thinking hard while tilting his head like he is about to break out in a fever.
Donna joins the conversation.

“We just observe from the congregation seats as the Archbishop-sama descends at the time of the mass.
It seems he isn’t here in the nest all the time.”

“Hnnn…….?”

Maybe he is something of a supernatural being.

The management of the religious organization is handled directly by the Leader, Gazaine, therefore, it has effectively become an almost complete dictatorship of Gazaine.
That being said, it doesn’t look like he is abusing his power that much.
There is no way the emissaries who believe their creed would ever disobey him anyway.

If there were any malcontent elements, then I would’ve talked to them and stirred a rebellion, but I don’t hear so much of an idle complaint against Gazaine within the religious organization.
I have to say, Gazaine’s position as the proxy of the Archbishop Glutometsa is as firm as stone.

As a whole, this religious organization is governed exceedingly efficiently.
If I had to point out where that efficiency comes from, then I would say the clarity of the creed that requires obedience to the Evil God, Monguenes, the system of reward and punishment that rewards them proportionately according to how much people they have killed, and the abstemious organization structure that resembles a monastery.
I can only assume that it was a terribly smart person that planned out the system of 〈Yatagarasu〉 and this nest.

“But, we didn’t even get to see Archbishop-sama until a year ago, so we are fortunate now.”

Donna said.

“Right right. Ever since Archbishop-sama started to show himself the religious organization changed too.
The organization got bigger and a base perfect for 〈Yatagarasu〉, the nest, was also found.”

Miguel joined the topic.

……wait, he just said something I can't overlook.

"Eh?
The nest wasn't your hideout before?"

Miguel was shocked by my words.

"Fellow believer Orochi, don't say hideout, it's like we are bandits or something.
Say sacred residence instead."

"N-no, that's besides the point, but did you move to this「sacred residence」only recently?"

"That's right. Archbishop-sama sent a divine revelation about this wonderful base, thinking of the emissaries who were wandering from battlefield to battlefield."

"……the Archbishop-sama who didn't show himself to the emissaries before, did that?"

This time Donna answers.

"Nn. Since we settled into this base there were many new children joining so it became fun.
The adult emissaries said that since we have a promising newcomer like Fellow believer Orochi,〈Yatagarasu〉will grow bigger in the future."

"Hnn……..?"

I asked after thinking for a bit.

"I'm most likely wrong, but…. did Gazaine also become a Leader around that time?"

Miguel answered my question in a matter-of-fact tone.

"That's right?
Gazaine-sama suddenly appeared about a year ago, made the then top brass of the religious organization recognize his ability and became one of the leaders in no time.
The top brass of that time was very turbulent and after a dispute about the leadership, Gazaine-sama took the position of the Leader."

"Who was the Leader before Gazaine?"

"…..Fellow believer Orochi.
Even if you are close with him, I don't think you should talk about the Leader without any honorifics."

Donna said.

"….got it.
So, who was the Leader-sama before Gazaine-sama?"

"Hmmm……how was it?"

Miguel and Donna is tilting their head.
There,

“——until then there was a top brass, but there was no position called a Leader.”

Eremia told us.

“The top brass managed the religious organization by consulting with each other.”

“What happened to that top brass?”

“Everyone was killed.”

“….huh!?”

I unintentionally let out a sound of bewilderment.
Eremia said it like it was natural.

“It’s not something to be surprised about, right?
That’s how it is when you compete for the leadership in this religious organization.
The most skillful assassin should be on the top of 〈Yatagarasu〉.”

“Isn’t it Gazaine who is saying that?”

“Mnn….that’s, right I guess.
He started saying that after he became the current Leader….I think.”

Donna’s words are amazingly uncertain.

“Oi oi……”

In other words, Gazaine took over the religious organization.

“Before this, it was strictly forbidden to kill someone within the religious organization, if you broke this law you were severely tortured and killed in the end.
…..oh? That’s very different from now, huh?”

Eremia tilts her head.

“*——Melby*“

I call out to the hidden Melby with [Telepathic Communication].

“*Nn, I know what you want to say.
Indeed, there are traces of hypnotic magic on these children.*“

“*Same as the woodcutter in Riverette Village?*“

“*The same.*

It was imprinted much more softly over a long period of time, but it was done by the same practitioner.“

Melby declared as such.

“*That reminds me, one month ago, the night when the mansion was attacked in Fauno City, Melby was worried about something.*
Was that perhaps——”

“*Ah, the thing from that time?*
That was, the servant…..Marcella-san, was it.
I had a strange feeling about her.
If I think about it now, she was under the same spell, only very lightly so we don’t get suspicious.
If I was more reliable that time…..“

Melby said feeling mortified.

As I thought.

That means there is a high chance that 〈Yatagarasu〉 knew that we removed the spell from the woodcutter in Riverette Village.

Therefore they didn’t brazenly use magic on Marcella-san like with the woodcutter, but they used a combination of threats after kidnapping and weak magic and instructed her to do something.
It seems it was the 〈Yatagarasu〉 members that scattered the pollen of the Repchipa grass, so Marcella-san’s role was probably only providing information about the security and opening the locks from inside.

The fact that Melby’s existence was not exposed means that after we left, members of 〈Yatagarasu〉 went back to gather information in Riverette Village and only found out that someone among us removed the spell.
They probably thought that Julia-kaasan, who is an excellent mage, was the one who removed it.

We asked that they don’t tell anyone from outside the village about Fairies, and it looks like the people of Riverette Village faithfully kept their promise.

The fact that Melby wasn’t discovered was the silver lining.
Because if Melby wasn’t here, then everyday life would’ve become many times more difficult here.

“*——Thanks, Melby.“*

“*Wh-, what are saying suddenly.*
I didn’t notice the spell that was put on Marcella-san you know?“

"That can't be helped.
They were one step ahead of us.
Me too, I was a bit conceited from learning various skills.
But, because Melby is at my side now I'm really being saved.
I'm not talking about [Telepathic Communication] or the dimensional stash, if Melby wasn't here with me now I honestly don't think I would've been able to keep myself sane."

"I, I see…..
You are welcome…… is this the appropriate thing to say here?"

While I was speaking with Melby, my Fellow young believers tidied up the room and started to slip into their beds.

"——Fellow believer Orochi, turn off the light please."

Since Miguel asked me, I extinguished the ∩ (Light) that was floating in the room with ∃ (Erase).

"Couldn't you just cancel the ∩ (Light) without especially using ∃ (Erase)?"

Eremia asked me.

"Everything depends on practice.
Particularly erase magic is something you have to be able to use in an instant or it's meaningless."

"Is that steady practice the secret of Fellow believer Orochi's strength~?"

Donna said while putting the smaller children to sleep.

"I still have a long way to go.
I couldn't even get a hit on Gazaine yet."

"There is frickin' nobody in this nest that can get a hit on the Leader!"

The retort from Miguel served as the end to the conversation, then after a short while, the sleeper's breathing from the children could be heard.

After confirming with [Detect Presence] that everyone fell asleep, I slowly got up from the bed.

——Well then, the night is just beginning.

| TOC |

39. A day in the life of the Newbie Emissary Orochi-kun (Late Night) (Firebird)

Late at night——

After I've confirmed that the child group fell asleep, I quietly slipped out of the room.
As a precaution, I'm having Melby sleep in the room in the unlikely case of a patrol coming.

The children's room is at the back of the nest, so without a trolley people can't go in and out of it.

I heard it was so they could protect the children better if it came to it, but I can only think that it's like this to keep them from running away.

With the trolley, if you don't send signals with a certain rhythm via the speaking tubes placed here and there, then the rail switches won't get switched and you can't get to your destination.

Also, since the trolleys can't be moved without 2 people see-sawing, one person can't get it to move.

Of course, in my case, I can move it forcefully by using [Physical Magic].
But, if I were to move the trolley at night it would make a sound, so it's not like I can move it willy-nilly.

Then, you might think, I should just walk on the rails, but it's built in a way so you can't do that.

In several places in the tunnel, there are deep holes that were dug out with narrow railway bridge above them so you can only get over by rail.
Some agile emissaries perhaps could make it over, but in anticipation of that, there are many clappers placed on the railway bridge.
It's set up so barely any amount of weight placed on it triggers a sound, so if you carelessly try to cross over, you will be in deep trouble.
When I just arrived I also triggered it and in the end, I had to stick to the ceiling in a cavity and watch until the emissaries who came to check the situation passed by.
Fortunately, the clappers apparently mistakenly go off from the slightest vibration, so the emissary who came over went back without much investigation.

Anyhow, measures like these that prevent the members from leaving the nest on their own accord are set up in double or triple layers.

In my previous life, cults also isolated their believers in religious institutions in remote areas so they wouldn't have any contact with people from the outside.
Because by getting hold of information from the outside they realize how their religious organization is viewed objectively, and their brainwashing sometimes breaks…..was the reason I think.

Most likely that is also the reason why〈Yatagarasu〉has their hideout in a remote place like this.

I sneak in the trolley room, then I confirm with [Night Vision] that there is no one watching, then I set foot in the inner part of the tunnel on top of the lain down rails.
I proceed for a few hundred meters in total darkness.
I stray from the rails where there is an opening of a natural cave and slip into a hole that is barely 1 meter tall.

Inside the hole, there is a somewhat open space.
Even if I say that it's only true for me who is about 1 meter tall, if a grown adult were to come in, they might hit their head even in a bent posture.

Inside that hole, there are 3 more holes.
Beyond that stretches a 1 meter tall, about 80 cm wide rectangular passage.

——It's a secret passage I excavated with [Earth Element Magic] when I had the time.

I call this secret passage「Duct」.
It's not like it's a ventilation shaft, it's simply about the ambiance.

In the morning during the excavation work, I also employ a little trick.
When I'm using [Earth Element Magic], I also dig inside the earth and create cavities that serve as marks for when I'm digging out the duct.
After that, when I finish digging near it at night, I put my ear against the wall of the duct and use [Keen Hearing] to determine the position of the cavity from the reverberation of the sounds and dig the tunnel aiming towards that.
It's troublesome, but if by chance I punch through the floor or the wall, even if I fix it by magic, there would be distinct marks of it remaining, so it can't be helped.

"Uhmm….I guess I finished the mapping of the 4th level yesterday."

Today is the 5th floor—— I want to investigate the floor where the excavation site and the private rooms of the top brass of the religious organization are.

However, of course, Gazaine is also on the floor where the top brass is.
Gazaine has the Master class Skill [Sense Danger].
Therefore, even if I'm lurking inside the earth, there is a possibility of getting detected.
In light of that, until the level of my [Sense Danger] exceeded Gazaine's, I couldn't start investigating the floor where the top brass is.

As I was heading towards the downward slanting tunnel, the Necklace of「Loyalty」that was put around my neck made a sound.

"Oops….I have to change the numbers."

I touch the Necklace of「Loyalty」with the tip of my fingers.

The collar resembles the lock used for bicycles in my previous world.
It's the combination of a durable ring made from an unknown material and a number type padlock.
The combination consists of 5 digits.

The emissary who put this around my neck,

"You are free to try and remove it, you know? However, if you mess up the number you will be in so much pain that you will faint."

said this.

But, when I tried using [Appraise] on it,

《Collar of Subordination: When the registered keyword is spoken, the ring will contract. The current keyword is「Repent」. If someone tries to forcefully remove it it will absorb 20 MP.》

Saying that it's for Loyalty is a big fat lie, it's a slave collar.

But, its effect is surprisingly not that big of a deal.
In short, if someone with less than or equal to 20 MP tries to release it and fails, then that person's MP will be exhausted and will simply faint.

No…..depending on how you look at it, it's something amazing after all.
Because even if someone has an MP amount comparable to Julia-kaasan, they can only try the numbers 10-something times each time.
With only 10-something tries each day, it's very much hopeless to find the correct number out of ten thousand possibilities.

That being said—— you probably know it already.
To me, this is nothing more than a toy.

I got it off in a week.

The reason why it was making a sound just now was because I left the combination on the padlock as the release combination, so the padlock of the collar was almost opened from the shaking as I was walking.
In the pitch black darkness I change the number by relying on the feeling on the tip of my finger and make sure to close the lock on my collar.

By the way, the release number is 91122.
I was thinking that the first digit shouldn't be a low number so I tried them in the sequence of 7,8,9, so I managed to hit the correct one sooner than I thought.

Furthermore, while they were sleeping I examined the other kids' collars and unexpectedly the release number is the same 91122 for everyone.
Reusing a password like that, if Koike-san from General Affairs heard of that he would flip out.

Well, if they were to leave a password management table as a written document then there would be a possibility of someone taking a look in some instances.
If it's a number that is impossible to find, then it's not like I don't see the advantage of only keeping it in the heads of the leaders.

With this they can take the collar off the children if it comes to that for some reason.

That being said, the children have another「collar」on them and it's much more troublesome.

——Brainwashing.

Even if I removed their collars, they, who received the religious organization's education focused on brainwashing, starting with the Sin Examination, ever since they were ripped from their parents, would not even think of running away from the religious organization.
Rather, there is a possibility they would instead report me to the religious organization's side.

So, before removing their visible collar, I must remove their invisible collar.

I want to save the children who are here.

For that end, while I make these ducts, map the nest, and investigate the release number for the collar, at the same time during the day I diligently work to gain their trust and also scheme to increase my information sources within the religious organization.

At night, the reason I'm telling tales to the children is not just to have a good time.
To undo the brainwashing, first I have to get them to trust me.
For that end, I need to have fun with them and have them think of me as a comrade.

Also, through those tales, I'm thinking of putting the teachings of the religious organization in perspective.
The set of values of this religious organization is terribly one-sided.
Therefore, if they get a chance to experience a different set of values, then they will get a feeling of out of place for sure.
And if that out of place feeling piles up further and further, then the children could perhaps triumph over the curse of the religious organization with their own power.

I know that this requires a bunch of patience, but if I just outright deny the teachings of the religious organization then all I will get is a backlash.
I'm thinking of making the best use of [No Fatigue] and keep at it tenaciously.

——Well then, late at night is the time for raising Skills.

First of all, it's fastest if I show it.
Don.

《Edgar Chrebl（Forth Son of Viscount Chrebl, Noble of Santamana Kingdom,《Baby Scarlet》,

《Bottomless Orochi》)

Level 32
HP 67/67
MP 3178/3178（584↑）

Skills
・Mythical class
[No Fatigue] –
[Instant Interpretation] –

・Legendary class
[Psychokinesis] 1（NEW！）
[Spirit Magic] 2（NEW！）
[Appraisal] 9 (MAX)
[Database] –
[Telepathic Communication] 3（↑2）

・Master class
[Throwing Techniques] 2（NEW！）
[Shuriken Techniques] 2（NEW！）
[Physical Magic] 9（↑1、MAX）
[Fire Element Magic] 1（NEW！）
[Earth Element Magic] 4（NEW！）
[Enchant Magic] 3
[Mana Control] 7（↑1）
[Letterless Invocation] 8（↑2）
[Mana Detection] 1（NEW）
[Magic Language] 3（↑2）
[Sense Presence] 4（NEW！）
[Dark Vision] 2（NEW！）
[Sculpting] 3（NEW！）

・General
[Throwing Spear Techniques] 5
[Flying Sword Techniques] 5（↑3）
[Shuriken Skills] 9（↑3、MAX）
[Throwing Axe Techniques] 2
[Knife Throwing] 5（↑3）
[Steel Thread Skills] 4（NEW！）
[Assassination Skills] 5（NEW！）
[Jump] 4（NEW！）
[Fire Magic] 9（↑1、MAX）
[Water Magic] 4（↑2）
[Wind Magic] 7（↑1）
[Earth Magic] 9（↑7、MAX）
[Light Magic] 8（↑3）

[Lightning Magic] 7（NEW！）
[Telekinesis Magic] 9 (MAX)
[Mana Manipulation] 9 (MAX)
[Simultaneous Invocation] 9 (MAX)
[Mana Perception] 9 (↑6，MAX)
[Cryptanalysis] 2
[Keen Hearing] 9（↑2、MAX）
[Farsight] 4（↑2）
[Night Vision] 9（↑2、MAX）
[Stealthy Steps] 7（NEW！）
[Wood Carving] 9（MAX）
[Cooking] 2（NEW！）

《Blessing of a Benevolent God +1》
》

First, let's take a look at my nickname.

《Bottomless Orochi》

The fact that I got this nickname probably means that I've become a rumor among the Fellow believers.
I try to be careful about not letting people suspect anything about [No Fatigue].
But, contrary to one's expectations it quite hard to act like you are tired when you are not, so they probably think I'm someone with bottomless stamina.
My nickname probably came from that.

Then, on the topic of Skills, there are many this time.
If you find it too bothersome, then there shouldn't be too much problem if you just glance through them.

Let's take a look starting from [Sense Presence].
I got this as a counter stop bonus from [Keen Hearing].
[Keen Hearing]'s target was sound, but [Sense Presence], rather than sounds, can perceive the slight feeling of presence-like something that people and animals give off.
As the Skill level went up, its range and accuracy also increased and currently I can grasp the movements of other people if they are in the same building as me.
If all I want to know if someone is present, then I can probably do it with a radius of a few hundred meters.
With this it became unlikely to fall prey to a surprise attack like what happened in Fauno City.

Next, [Wood Carving] and [Sculpting].
In the midst of the literally bloodthirsty everyday life in the religious organization, emissaries are urged to take up woodworking as a way to relax.
Since it doesn't cost any money and they will also get better at handling knives.
There are circle type gatherings within the nest ranging from weekend carpenter types to art

types. I belong to the wood carving circle.

I'm annoyed that we can only carve statues of the Evil God, but the wood carving itself is fun, so unintentionally I get passionate about it.

Furthermore, wood carving has a skills attached to it.
A Skill is a blend of the person's own techniques and the Gift from the Gods, so overall its improvement is faster than the 「wood carving」 and 「sculpting」from my previous world.
Also, thanks to the Skill, the current state of the wood and what happens if I use the chisel here, things like these become clear as day.
As a result I've become able to create one palmtop sized Evil God sculpture in about 20-30 minutes.

It's so fun working with it that I inadvertently immerse myself in it.
Since I can't get tired because of [No Fatigue], once I 「immerse」 myself in it, I completely forget the time and I could keep doing it for half-a-day or even an entire day.
Once, I thought of doing it for a bit before Skill raising, but when I came to, it was already morning.
This can be said to be a harmful side of [No Fatigue].

But, thanks to that my Skill level went up quickly, so I managed to get the Master class Skill [Sculpting].
The difference from [Wood Carving] is that the Skill is not only applicable for wood, but for stone and metal too.
It should also come in handy in regards to repairing the junk we got from the ruins.
I managed to get the Skill I *aimed for* from an unexpected source, so I'm pleased with myself.

There are many Skills I got due to the training of the religious assassin organization.
[Throwing Techniques] was the counter stop bonus for [Shuriken Skills] and I got it at the same time as [Shuriken Techniques].
It's the Skill that Father Solow informed me about.
It has the simple yet useful function of instinctively knowing the trajectory and impact point when something is thrown.

Aside from those there is the [Steel Thread Skills] I used when training with Gazaine.
The [Stealthy Steps], [Jump], and [Assassination Skills] I got from the lessons of the instructor group.
The strange one is the [Cooking] I got from making okonomiyaki.
I thought Skills were only related to fighting, but I guess something like this exists too.

Also, I finally maxed out [Fire Magic] and got [Fire Element Magic], same as Julia-kaasan.
It seems I don't have as high of an aptitude for it like mom, but as someone who has the same blood flowing through his veins as mom, I wanted to gain this Skill for sure.

Furthermore, I got the Master class Skill [Psychokinesis] from maxing out [Physical Magic].
This Skill is able to release mana directly as telekinetic power, so compared to [Physical

Magic] that works by converting mana to telekinetic power through magic, this has better fuel efficiency, better output, and it's much more intuitive to operate.
If you try to forcefully increase its output then its MP consumption increases more and more, so it should prove useful when trying to get rid of MP when expanding the maximum MP.

Another one that's related to magic, I also got [Mana Detection] from maxing out [Mana Perception].
It seems the training to acquire Melby's [Telepathic Communication] and [Spirit Magic] also became a training for [Mana Perception] as a secondary effect.
You can think of [Mana Detection] as a high performance version of [Mana Perception], but a simple yet important difference is that I've become able to translate the amount of detected mana into MP values.

I can also say I acquired [Spirit Magic] if it's for something simple, but it will most likely be much later when I will be able use it in fight.
I will tell you about the possible interesting uses for it at that time.

And finally, the star performer [Lightning Magic].

It was hard work to acquire this one.

Eh? Don't I have the aptitude for it, you ask?

Indeed, as Father Solow said, I probably have the aptitude for it.

However, I didn't know the magic letter for [Lightning Magic].

[Letterless Invocation] also can't be used if you don't know the letter.

[Lightning Magic] is a new magic, so it's not in『Abbadon Magic Compilation』and Melby didn't know it either.
Melby showed me a handy trick of causing lightning by asking the wind and water spirits, but that's not what I'm currently looking for.

In other words, I didn't have the least bit of leads.

Then how did I end up acquiring it?

My method was like this.

First I imagine Lightning, like when I'm using other type of magics.

Next, I try to write the magic letter.

Of course, I don't know the magic letter for lightning, but as a general rule, magic letters are written from top to bottom and left to right.

Using that I move my finger from top left to bottom right in a random way.

And at the same time I sense the mana flowing through the magic letter, using [Magic Perception] and [Magic Detection].

With that, although I don't feel anything most of the time, but with a low probability, there are times when the mana flows partway.

In this case, it should mean that I followed the same path as the magic letter for lightning.

By using this theory, the magic letter gradually becomes clear from top-left to bottom-right with the help of trial and error.

——Right. It's a perfect theory.

Is what I was thinking as I started working on it, but it wasn't that easy.

It seems that picturing the whole magic letter is a requirement for the invocation, so even if the mana flows you don't clearly know what part of the random curve was correct.

In the end, I ended up writing 「letters」 that somehow resemble it, confirmed how it feels, then compared and verified those that were a 「hit」, it became a straightforward repetition work.

However, after 10 days of 3 hours a night work, I finally 「discovered」 the magic letter for Lightning.

ξ(Thunder).

Of all things, it had to have a shape that was hard to find.

But, it was worth going through all that trouble.

Now that I actually used it, I can tell that out of all the magics I've used until now, this fits me best.

I understand the flow of mana clear as day.

Julia-kaasan probably also feels this way when she uses [Fire Magic].
It's no wonder she got impatient with the way I did it.

I finally got it, so I decided to use [Lightning Magic] to deepen my relationship with the child group.
I borrowed a metal sphere that was excavated from the ruins, then I poured in some weak [Lightning Magic].
Then if I touch that metal sphere, then *oh how mysterious*, my hair is moving here and there.
It's just a rip-off of a common science experiment, but it was very well received by the children.

Father Solow said that the people of this word can't really imagine lightning too well, but how about the children?

If they look like they will keep it a secret, I could perhaps teach it to them.

Thinking those things, I proceed forward inside of the duct while training my [Dark Vision].
This [Dark Vision] is the counter stop bonus for [Night Vision].
[Night Vision] is meaningless in places where there is no light at all, but with [Dark Vision], I have no idea by what logic, but even in this lightless duct I can more or less see what's around me.

Today my aim is the 5th level, so I start using [Earth Element Magic] from partway to dig a duct.
Probing for my current location using [Sense Presence] and [Keen Hearing] needs a lot of concentration, but it's not difficult for me who has [No Fatigue].

By spending 2 hours on it, I investigated about a third of the 5th level.
Mainly the side where the ruins are.
Since it would be trouble if I wander into the floor where the top brass is while I don't know the situation.

——Well then, let's head back soon and start the repetition work in the space I created for raising Skills.

Just as I was thinking that, I received a [Telepathic Communication] from Melby.

| TOC |

40. A day in the life of the Newbie Emissary Orochi-kun (Midnight) (Firebird)

A [Telepathic Communication] arrived from Melby.

"*——Eremia has snuck out of the room.*"

"*Do you know where she went?*"

"*Who knows, maybe the same place as usual?*"

"*I'll try going there.*
Then, Melby, as we planned……"

"*Right. You be careful too.*"

Melby will now teleport to the Fairy Village and entrust my letter to Secela and the others.
Secel and Secela will take that letter to Riverette Village and ask the spokesperson to send it by fast horse or carrier pigeon.
The letter is, of course, addressed to Alfred-tousan, who is currently staying in Fauno City.

In other words, it's a periodic report.

After the Sin Examination, I wrote a letter when no one was looking and entrusted it to Melby and had her send it.
That letter, in which I explained my current situation in detail, safely made it to dad and I also received an answer.

The first thing I requested in the letter was to determine the location of the nest.
When I was being brought to this「Crow's Nest」I was not only blindfolded, but the path we took was also cleverly camouflaged.
Melby wasn't blindfolded, but because she is unfamiliar with the outside topography, all she could tell was that the nest is somewhere between north and west from Fauno City.

When I asked if she could make the Gate to the Fairy Village anyway, she said as long as the marker is placed in the current location there is no problem.
As I thought, that is very handy.
Rather, I suspect that probably the Gate being so convenient is the reason why Melby is so bad with the topography and directions.

Anyhow, I wrote as much as I could remember from outside and asked dad and mom to determine the location of the nest.
According to the letter, they mobilized the knights and some dependable adventurers immediately and started searching, but for now, they couldn't find it yet.

What makes the search difficult is not just that there are insufficient tangible hints.
Since the subject of the search is the hideout of the religious assassin organization

〈Yatagarasu〉, there is a possibility that people with half-baked skills would instead get discovered and killed by the members of 〈Yatagarasu〉.
Therefore, whether it be a knight or an adventurer, only those that aren't any inferior to the assassins of 〈Yatagarasu〉 can be chosen and that greatly decreases the number of people that can be mobilized.

Also, the season was also bad.
As it was a common topic in Fauno City, it's the season when harpies migrate from one territory to another west from Fauno City.
There are especially many this year and also, they developed a tendency to create nests in close proximity to Fauno City.
The adventurers' guild is extremely busy with dealing with the harpies, so there aren't any competent adventurers left that can be allocated to the search for the nest.

Ah, by the way, harpies, as many of you probably know this already, are half humanoid, half bird monsters with feathers.
Their appearance is roughly humanoid, but their facial features are close to a bird, their arms are wings, and their legs are are completely bird legs.
Since the size of their brains is not much different from a goblin's, they absolutely can't be reasoned with.
They say since they like to eat human meat and even experienced monster tamers have problems taming them.
In other words, it's a monster that can only be exterminated.

Individually they are not that strong, but once they flock together, they are hard to deal with, so I heard that it's hard to fight a flock like that if there aren't adventurers with above average ability.
Because of that, the Fauno City adventurers' guild, that was small to begin with, is out of manpower.

Due to that influence, Moria-san, Huffman-san, and surprisingly Julia-kaasan, who temporarily returned to active duty, are also participating in the search for the nest it seems.
They said that Chester-niisan, who I haven't met yet, is also helping out in between the harpy exterminations.

Of course, mom isn't participating in the search just because they are low on manpower, but because she couldn't bear to just sit idle.
The contents of the letter conveyed that they are very worried about me, it really makes me think I did something inexcusable.

However, I asked dad that even if they manage to find the nest they should wait before launching an attack.

I want to at least undo the brainwashing on the children, and if possible, I want to lay down a plan to catch the Archbishop Glutometza, and with those done, I want to launch attacks from the inside and from the outside at the same time.

If we attack without properly preparing for it first, then we might allow Gazaine and the top brass to get away, and if that happens, our family would have to be constantly wary of possible assassinations.
It doesn't matter how many Skills I have, repelling assassins that employ every possible method to attack is difficult.
In particular, I shiver when I think of the possibility of a powerful person like Gazaine attacking us without holding anything back.

That is why we will crush this religious organization with simultaneous attacks from the inside and the outside.
If we don't go that far, we won't be able to have a good night sleep after that.

When I pushed this idea in my letter, dad wrote back like this.

"As Viscount Chrebl, a noble of Santamana Kingdom, I approve of your plans.
However, as Ed's father, I oppose that plan.
Because this plan leaves you in too much danger.
According to your reports, 〈Yatagarasu〉 is much bigger than we imagined and they are amassing power.
I shiver when I think what would've happened if they managed to act against the Kingdom in concert with the 〈Black Wolf Fang〉.
If I didn't know your Status, then you going up against the huge organization by yourself could only be described as reckless.
What I really want is for you to escape from the nest and come back to us as soon as possible without thinking of crushing 〈Yatagarasu〉.
However, your fears are also warranted.
For the safety of our family, I want to destroy 〈Yatagarasu〉 no matter what.
That's why, Julia and I talked a lot about this, even got into a wrestling fight with each other (of course, I lost), and as a result we decided to accept your suggestion.
However, if for some reason you fail to get in contact with us, I will conclude that you are in grave danger and I will gather all the forces at my disposal and hit 〈Yatagarasu〉.
Also, this you have to promise me.
Don't get into unnecessary danger.
Inside a religious assassin organization, you will probably encounter some gruesome scenes.
You will probably witness some obvious injustices.
It's natural to unable to forgive them for it.
However, if pursuing justice would mean that you are exposed to extreme danger, then ***I want you to turn a blind eye to that injustice****.*
Perhaps what I'm saying is horrible.
Even so, I don't want to lose anyone close to me ever again.
That's why, please prioritize your own well-being instead of pursuing justice.
That is what I ask of you."

I almost teared up reading it.

——I will return to their side without fail.

I vowed once again.

Well then, it looks like Melby already jumped to the Fairy Village, there is no answer even if I talk to her using [Telepathic Communication].

I wrestled with a bit of loneliness while returning via the duct, then after I reached the floor where the child group is I went up the stairs.

There is a small plot there.

If I look up to the ceiling, there is a big hole up high which serves as a ventilation hole.
There is an inner part to the ventilation hole, so it doesn't matter how agile you are, you won't be able to use rock climbing to go out though that.

Since this big hole provides sunlight that is very valuable underground, it's used to cultivate fresh vegetables.

In the middle of the vegetable garden, who knows who made it, there is a circular flower bed.
Eremia is standing next to that flower bed that is being illuminated by the moonlight.

As expected of a dark elf, the moonlight fits her almost criminally well.

Eremia brings a metal sushi mat looking thing to her mouth.

There is an assassination tool called iron pipe.
Its shape is as the name suggests, a pipe made of iron with one of its ends sharpened diagonally.
If you stab this in the target's carotid artery or heart, then 'oh how mysterious, isn't that fresh blood that flows through and gushes out the pipe vigorously?', it's a tool with an intended use like that.
Since it doesn't cause instant death, you should use it on restrained targets, or deliberately miss larger veins and use it for torture, so explained the emissaries of the instructor group.

Eremia is holding an object made by bundling up multiple of those iron pipes.
The lengths of the pipes get shorter from one side to the other.

Eremia slowly put her lips near those iron pipes——then she slowly breathed out.

It was a melancholic melody that resounded from it.

I see, those iron pipes make up a flute.
Now that I think about it, there was something like that flute among the Japanese instruments.
I think its name was Shou.

A melancholic and transparent melody spreads around us, fitting for a moonlit night.

I entrust myself to that melody——

"——Who is there-?"

Suddenly the performance stopped and Eremia looked back and called out.

"….did I intrude?"

"Oh, it's just Fellow believer Orochi.
——Good moonlit night."

"Good moonlit night?"

"Ah, sorry.
We said that at times like these in the village I was living in."

"Hoh…..an elegant greeting."

"Although there aren't many opportunities to use it."

Dark elves are associated much closely with the night than elves, but apparently it's not like they are nocturnal.

"Will we be having a debate about the doctrines again?"

"If Eremia has no problem with it."

"I'm fine with it.
I also want Fellow believer Orochi to understand more about Evil God-sama."

Eremia said this with a soft smile.

If contents of what she was saying were something else, then that smile would probably leave me charmed.
She is a considerably beautiful girl even now, but in the future she will most likely become a shocking beauty.

Eremia is like that too, but the emissaries of 〈Yatagarasu〉 are unexpectedly—— normal.
I wouldn't peg them as an underling of the Evil God.

Starting from the kidnapping incident in Riverette Village, then on the way to Fauno City, and during the attack on the Viscount Chrebl mansion in Fauno City, I killed members of 〈Yatagarasu〉.

Of course, I don't regret it.
If I didn't kill them we could've been killed.
If they don't want to get killed then don't try to kill others, is what it comes down to.

But, in this nest there should be many emissaries that had some of their comrades killed by

me.
However, I never had any emissaries reproach me about it at all.

Because it's their sacred duty.
Everyone simply accepts that and look like they don't harbor any grudges against me.

By being in the nest and associating with them I almost start to doubt my own feelings.
I almost having feelings of guilt from killing people similar to them.

At times like those, I shake my head and tell myself that I didn't do anything wrong, but….. the fact that I have to do that means that somewhere deep in my heart I think that I may have made a mistake.

Those times I remember Goddess-sama.

She is a profoundly benevolent Goddess-sama who felt pity for me, who met a tragic end, and allowed me to reincarnate into Marquekt, although with conditions attached.
The Evil God Monguenes is an entity that is considered an enemy by her.
The religious assassin organization that worships the Evil God, is a tool used by the Evil God for wicked ends, emissaries that, at a glance appear as good people, are assassins that go around killing innocent people for their demented creed.

As I think it through to that I let out a bitter laugh.

When I'm worried I remember my God and shake off my hesitation.
I can't really laugh at the emissaries of 〈Yatagarasu〉 like this.
It's like I'm a believer in a religion worshipping the Goddess-sama.

——What is it to believe.
——What is brainwashing and what is the truth.

Good grief, I feel like I'm going crazy…..

"….what is it?"

"It's nothing."

After shaking my head I look for a topic.

Eremia is smart and also knowledgeable about the doctrines, so I try to argue with her head on under the pretext of me trying to learn.
Of course, my hidden objective is to raise doubts in Eremia about the teachings of the religious organization and have her escape the brainwashing by her own power.

In my previous world, there was a cult that caused a big incident.
At that time, there was a documentary that was broadcasted many times that introduced the task of a withdrawal counselor.

They said to undo the cult's brainwashing they have to provide information from outside to the person and let the person think about it by himself/herself.
They mustn't outright deny everything, instead maintain a place of discussion and continue to patiently have a dialogue with them.
It's not something I would've been able to do in my previous life, but now that I have [No Fatigue], it should be possible to do that kind of thing.

"——Why does Eremia believe in the teachings of the religious organization?"

"……soon the end of this world will come. Only the chosen ones will be able to go to God's country."

"Aubesso Scriptures 1:10, I think it was.
When Armageddon happens, only those that believe in the Evil God will be saved, was it?
But, apart from that, the end of the world can be prevented by continuously killing the apostles of the Devil."

As I said this, Eremia nodded looking satisfied.

It's frightening that I think that it was worth studying if I got to see that expression of hers.
If Eremia were to become a door-to-door solicitor for the religious organization, then many no-good adults would get tricked by her.

"That is why I keep killing those apostles.
Because I want to save everyone.
Society doesn't believe what Evil God-sama says, so I'm regarded as a murderer, but……even if I'm called that, I will fight for everyone."

"Eremia is a『chosen one』.
You can get saved by yourself, but you kill anyway?"

"It doesn't mean anything if I'm the only one that gets saved.
Everyone has to be saved."

There is a pure sense of duty reflecting in Eremia's eyes.

"I can't really accept that."

"Why?"

Eremia's expression becomes a bit sad.
My heart aches that I'm making a 7 years old girl have that expression, but I can't raise the white flag here.

"If that's is true, then why does it need to be done in secret?
If you tell that fact to the people, then isn't dealing with it together faster and more certain?"

“Ordinary people’s thoughts are clouded by the Devil, so they wouldn’t hear us out.”

Isn’t that more like this religious organization, is what I wanted to say, but I held back.

“Then why is it that the people in this religious organization don’t have their thoughts clouded by the Devil?”

“That…..I don’t know, but it’s must be thanks to Evil God-sama.”

“If Evil God-sama is capable of that, then why doesn’t he do it for everyone?”

“……that, I don’t know.
But since it’s like that there has to be a special circumstance.
There are things that those who are not Gods can’t know.
If we leave it to Evil God-sama’s discretion, then there will be no problem.”

If she says it like that then I can’t say anything else anymore.

I decided to change my argument.

“……then, let’s not delve further into Evil God-sama’s circumstances, instead let’s talk about ourselves.
Even if we kill people on sacred duties we will be forgiven.
But, normally, killing people is a bad thing.
Even if that someone is an evil person, if we kill them even if they didn’t do anything to us, then we are in the wrong.
Among the people that we kill on sacred duties, there are ones that very much don’t look like they are doing anything bad.
Is it alright to kill those people just because there was a divine message, without even hearing out what they have to say?”

“Since we are not people, but emissaries, it’s not a sin for us to kill people.”

Eremia answers immediately.
She probably answered that way because she was taught to answer that way.

“But during the Sin Examination they pursued every little sin thoroughly, didn’t they?
So why is it that only the especially heavy sin of killing someone is forgiven?”

“That is because it’s a sacred duty according to a revelation from Evil God-sama, and the target is an underling of the Devil…..”

“It’s not like there is proof that those words are truly spoken by *Evil God-sama*.”

“Are you saying that Leader-sama and Priestess-sama are lying?”

That’s right, is what I want to say, but I endure.

“……that I don’t know.

But it's true that we aren't receiving those words directly from Evil God-sama."

Using polite speech with the Evil God makes my butt itch.

"That….is true, but…."

Eremia looks like she can't accept it.

"Why is then, if Evil God-sama is truly trying to defeat the Devil, that he is called Evil God anyway?"

"….i-, if you call our God evil, then——"

"——we are fine being called evil, right?
You can find that line in Aubesso Scriptures 23:5.
But I'm not talking about that.
If the Evil God is trying to defeat the Devil, then there is no reason for him to be called Evil, right?"

Aside from the Aubesso Scriptures, there are 3 gospels and 2 correspondences.
Quite meticulously, there is even a fragmented collection called Rosso's Apocrypha.

The composition of scriptures in〈Yatagarasu〉look too much like the Bible from my previous world.
Is this a coincidence?

Or perhaps——

Even while I was thinking about something else, Eremia was desperately trying to think.
——She desperately trying to defend the God she believes in.

"Th-, that is….."

In the end, Eremia couldn't think of any good rebuttals.
My objective is not to defeat her in an argument, so before I go too far, I decide to change the topic.

"What are the other gods doing anyway?
In the Aubesso Scriptures the existence of other gods was recognized.
Then why is that there are no signs of the other gods fighting against the Devil?
Instead, they are even picking a fight with the Evil God who should be fighting against the Devil."

"Th-, the other gods must have been deceived by the Devil."

"You say that every single god is deceived by the Devil?
If the Devil was that amazing of a being then isn't it strange that we can easily kill the apostles of that Devil?"

“….uuh”

“Also, why is it that only Evil God-sama didn’t get deceived by the Devil?
Even though among the other gods, starting with the God of Samsara, Atrazenec-sama, there are many wise gods.”

“Pr-, Priestess-sama will be able to tell.
Let’s go together with Fellow believer Orochi and hear her out?”

“Priestess-sama says that I’m an underling of the Devil, doesn’t she?”

「Priestess-sama」is a woman who looks about 30 years old.
If I had to describe her with terms from my previous world, then she is exactly like a female teacher type strict beauty, if you could get her to wear a red framed, upside down triangle shaped glasses, then it would be perfect.
Her favorite phrase is「Beg for forgiveness」.

To tell you the truth, I’m bad with her.
She also antagonizes me.

First, I suspected that she is doing it on the orders of Gazaine, but it seems the Priestess-sama has a thing for Gazaine.
So she is jealous of me, who is for some reason considered to be Gazaine’s favorite.
Apparently she imagines that darling to be the weird type of「favorite」……
Leave me out of that, please.

I tried using [Appraise] on her when I saw a chance, but she didn’t have any Skills or nicknames that could be considered a special characteristic.

“Y-yeah….that is why she told me to watch you attentively.”

“…..that not something you should be telling me.”

“Fufuh. I guess so.”

Eremia laughs like she finds it funny.
She usually gives off a feeling of a Takarazuka-like crossdressing beautiful girl, but at times like these she acts her age.

“You should go and sleep already.”

I disregard myself and say this.

“No….I’m fine.
I tire slower than other people.”

Eremia said that accompanied by a frail smile.

“——Tire slower?”

It's a keyword that cannot be overlooked, right?

"Yeah….everyone says that they get tired when they speak to me."

"That shouldn't be the case."

"Come to think of it, Fellow believer Orochi seems fine.
I'm rarely able to talk this much, so I was having fun……sorry about that."

Even though we were arguing about the doctrines, Eremia said she was「having fun」.
It's not like it's only lip service, apparently she really feels like it's fun.
Indeed, I don't really see Eremia talking to other children or adults.
Sometimes I see Gazaine serve as her opponent in a mock battle, but when he is fighting with Eremia, in contrast to how he is being tenacious when he is fighting me, he just wraps it up quickly.

"Why are you apologizing?"

"Because…..you got tired, right?"

"No….."

"Really?"

"Yeah."

Eremia is insistently making sure.

The truth is I already know the reason for that.

[Appraise].

《Eremia Lotteroot (Member of〈Yatagarasu〉Special Squad,《Shrine Maiden of the Dark Forest》)

Age: 7 years old
Dark Elf

Level 21
HP 30/30
MP 67/67

Skills
・Legendary class
[Fatigue Transfer] ― (Transfers one's fatigue to the people in the vicinity. Perpetually active.)

・Master class
[Espionage Techniques] 4

[Sense Presence] 4
[Assassination Techniques] 2
[Discern] 1

・General
[Assassination Skills] 9（MAX）
[Shuriken Skills] 5
[Dagger Skills] 4
[Night Vision] 4
[Darkness Magic] 4
[Unarmed Combat Skills] 3
[Knife Throwing] 3
[Light Magic] 3
[Mana Perception] 3
[Jump] 2
[Farsight] 2
[Wind Instruments] 2

《Blessing of the Dark Forest》(Medium compensation to the acquisition of Skills (including magic) related to sensing presence and concealment)
》

[Fatigue Transfer].

This skill should be the reason why Eremia was brought here.

The ability to make people tired around her——if you say it like that it sounds sad, but in case of fighting it's a very troublesome ability to deal with.
Because when Eremia is fighting she doesn't get tired, and in contrast to that the opponent suffers the fatigue from himself and also the fatigue that was transferred to him from Eremia, so he gets tired twice as much as normally.
Furthermore, the more Eremia attacks vigorously, the heavier the fatigue becomes that gets transferred to Eremia's opponent.
From the opponent's perspective, she attacks him by using his stamina as she pleases, there aren't many other things as unfair as this.

This is also the reason why Gazaine was grumbling about how he gets wiped when fighting against her.

However, the reason why Gazaine evaluated Eremia as a「genius」is not only because of [Fatigue Transfer].
Eremia has an outstanding amount of Skills for her age and their Levels are also high.
The reason may lie with the fact that she doesn't get tired, like with my [No Fatigue], and that improves the Skill acquisition, or maybe it's thanks to the《Blessing of the Dark Forest》, or it may be an inborn talent, but there aren't even many adult emissaries that are a match for her, not to mention the other children.

Therefore, Eremia ends up getting isolated no matter what.
She wasn't able to fit in properly with the child group and it's probably the same for the Special Squad she belongs to.

No——perhaps even before she was abducted by〈Yatagarasu〉Eremia may have been alienated.
Because the way she distances herself from other people feels a bit tragic to me.

However, that is why Eremia believes so deeply in the teachings of the religious organization.
She clings to them.

As long as she performs her sacred duties she will be appreciated here.
For Eremia, who didn't have many people appreciate her in the past, that is the most important reward.

Because of that, in a certain way,〈Yatagarasu〉is a「comfortable place」for her to live in.

Of course, this is only my arbitrary conjecture, but it shouldn't be too far from the truth.

"If you are fine with me, then I can at least serve as a conversation partner."

"I-is it alright?"

Eremia's eyes looked like they were clinging to hope.

"Yeah, but don't tell anyone about what we talk about, okay?"

"Fufuh.
They would get angry at us if we told them what we spoke about, huh."

I don't think it would end just with them getting angry at us.

"I wonder why is it that Priestess-sama dislikes you.
Even though you are very kind.
Priestess-sama is also kind so I think you would get along if you properly talked to each other."

"I don't think that's possible."

"That's not true!
I have a certain line that I like very much among the ones that Priestess-sama said to me."

"Hoh….what is it?"

I asked, doing my best to sound normal.
Because if I didn't do that I was afraid that my disinterest would ooze out.

However, my head suddenly cooled down from the words that left Eremia's mouth.

“——Do your best, so you can go to heaven like your father and mother.”

Hearing this line——I myself don’t know what kind of expression I must’ve had.

Did my expression stiffen, or maybe distort.
Did my face become red, or did it become pale.

The only thing that I was certain of is that my head went completely blank.

At first, I didn’t know what was that emotion that seethed inside of me.

I think that emotion was so intense that my head went numb.

After a few seconds, I finally realized I was mad with rage.

This is what they call being infuriated, a hot flame-like something is flowing from the back of my neck to the top of my head.

Because of that rage, even my own back muscles feel cold.

“……wh-, what happened? Fellow believer Orochi.”

Eremia asks looking perplexed.

Ah, Eremia doesn’t understand the meaning behind what she just said.

“….It’s, nothing.”

I once again think while slowly breathing out.

——How can they calmly say something like this after taking those children away from their parents.

There is a concept of stirring up trouble to take credit for its solution, but…… you can rarely come across such a cruel example as this one.

——I can’t let those people live.

It was this moment a dark flame flared up inside my heart.

| TOC |

41. The Flowers Blooming in the Wasteland

That day, Melby suddenly broke.

“U……”

“U?”

“Uwaaaahahhhhhhh~~~n!!”

“U-uwaah!?”

I ended up screaming unintentionally due to the “loud voice” I suddenly heard through [Telepathic Communication].

“W-what’s the matter, Fellow believer Orochi!?”

“N-nothing!”

I replied to Donna, who spoke with concern, then panickedly rushed out of the children’s room.
Ascending the nearby stairs, I head to the field below the big hole where I encountered Elemia before.
Today, Elemia had an engagement with the special forces and was away from the Nest, so I don’t have to worry about coming across her.

……When I think about it, we were able to speak with [Telepathic Communication] so there was no need to change locations, but I grabbed Melby and ran off by reflex.

Even in the meantime, Melby’s *Uwaaahhh……* continues.
Ah, my head feels like it’s going to split……

After checking that there was no one in the field, I address Melby.

“W-what’s wrong, Melby!”

“Uwaahhh~~n! I want no more of this dirt-filled place! I wanna lie in a flower field and bathe in the sunlight~!!”

I release the kicking and struggling Melby.

“Calm down.”

“What’s with this place anyway!?
Dirt, dirt, dirt in every direction, I feel like I’m suffocating!”

“That is… certainly true.”

“Uu.. (sob). After all, it’s already been…… a month and a half!?
We returned to the hamlet many times en route, but only for short intervals…… Apart from that, we’ve been underground this *whole* time!
I’m going crazy!? Is that wrong of me!?”

“N-no, you’re not wrong! You’re not wrong so calm down!”

Watching Melby throw a tantrum in the air, I thought,

——This was my mistake.

After all, I’ve often been associating with the emissaries and haven’t made much time to talk to Melby.
Even though she stays by my side the whole day.

Since Melby is very diligent, she probably sympathised with my circumstances and endured it.
She had lasted one and a half months in a place that would make Secel and Secela say “I’m bored~” within a few hours.

“Even with Master, there’s no progress at all! I get it! You’re in no state to be told that! But…… but…… uwaahhhh~~~n!”

I kneeled on the ground and lowered my head to the ground towards Melby, who was wailing once again.
——Right, it was a dogeza.
Illuminated by moonlight, this scene of an infant prostrating himself before a fairy at the bottom of a large hole might appear a little surreal when seen objectively.
Melby stopped bawling, startled.

“Wha…… wai.. stop it!
Even though I’ve been talking so selfishly!”

“But, what you’re saying is right.
I’m sorry for not noticing.”

“I-it’s fine! I’m sorry for speaking such nonsense too……”

In response to Melby despondent uttering, I stand up and say,

“——Alright. Then let’s head outside for a bit.”

“E-eh!? How!?”

“Naturally, via this big hole.”

“But this hole is full of barbs, and steel wires are laid out on every level with clappers set up.”

“I’ve thought about that already.
I have a plan especially for escaping in a pinch.
—— Melby, take that out, the thing I made the other day……”

“Ah, that.”

We were talking so in sync like a middle-aged couple, and Melby took the requested implement out from the dimension storage.

A large hook retrieved from the historic relics was attached to the end of a durable yet flexible wire also from the historic relics ; it was the so-called grappling hook.
It was one of the tools I made myself, welded together by means of the equipment from the historic relics and ᚦ (flame).

“Of course, you might be able to climb up if you use that, but what are you going to do about the clappers?”

“It’s alright.”

I used [Psychokinesis] to “fix” the clappers in place.
I usually used [Psychokinesis] for moving things but now, conversely, I used it to “stop it from moving”.
It’s the concept of reversal.

While making my body float with [Psychokinesis], I hook the grappling hook onto the steel threads and boulders and pull, rising higher and higher with the counterforce.
Checking the clappers with [Night Vision] and [Farsight], I fix them in place with [Psychokinesis] while moving so they were very sensitive, but I somehow reached the end of the hole after tens of seconds and managed to go out above the surface.

Of course, the flying Melby was following behind me.
If Melby was alone, she could go outside this way and return to the Fairy Hamlet, but she was worried about me and tried to stay with me as much as possible.

“—— It’s the stars.”

“You’re right, how pretty.”

Being unable to see the stars underground was natural, as there were few chances to even see the sun directly.
We’re not moles, stress would accumulate even for someone other than Melby.

“Now then, let’s look for flowers.”

“Eh, flowers? I-it’s fine, you don’t really…….”

“It’s not fine. Since the princess finally expressed her wishes, I’d like to grant it.”

“P-princess……eh?”

“N-nevermind……”

You should let those words flow out smoothly there.

Now then, despite having gone outside, the vicinity here is all wasteland.
So that we wouldn’t be found even by chance, I used [Sense Presence], [Night Vision], [Farsight], and the [Spy Techniques] I learned as we walked, but it was hard to even find any vegetation, let alone flowers.

Tumbleweed, wasn’t it.
The thing that appeared in Western films, rolling in the night wind. Seldom thicket-like things were there but winter has begun approaching so we weren’t able to find any flowers.

Meanwhile, the horizon was faintly growing lighter.

“I-if we don’t return quickly…… If you’re discovered, your efforts so far will be for naught!”

“It’s still fine for now.”

While pacifying the hasty Melby, I strain my eyes and continue to search for flowers.

“——Hm? That is……”

In order to ascertain the true identity of the thing I caught a fleeting glimpse of, I approach a rocky mountain that lay around a kilometre ahead.
From the base, I intently surveyed the top of the rocky mountain that looked like a miniature Ayers Rock standing approximately 20 metres tall.

“……What’s the matter?”

“Look at that.”

“That, you say…… Uh uh, I can’t see anything.”

It seems Melby’s eyes were usually good as a fairy, but it’s not like she had the [Farsight] skill.
I use [Psychokinesis] to reduce my body weight, then swung the grappling hook that played a big role tonight and threw it with a whoosh and the hook caught on the edge of the rocky mountain.
After that, I climb to the summit of the rocky mountain as though I were doing a rope climbing exercise.

There——

“Fuwahhh….!”

Melby released a shout of joy.

What was there was somewhat plain, but it was a flower field.
The thing blooming flowers were plants that resembled cacti, growing en masse.
Yellow, Pink, White, Aqua…. They bloomed multicoloured flowers as if they had good taste.
The sizes of the cacti-like plants varied from the size of a palm to around my height (a little over a metre).
The size of the flowers was constant regardless of the size of the plant it was growing on, somewhere between the size of a dandelion and Japanese morning glory.
At a glance, yellow was the most commonly seen, followed by light green, white, pink, light purple, but the aqua flowers were few enough to be counted.
Compared to the flower field beside the Fairy Hamlet, it was inferior in terms of the vividness of colours and density of flowers, but the fact that it was accustomed to the wilderness was enough.

From the top of the rocky mountain, the first rays of light from the dawning sun was just able to be seen clearly.
In that morning sun, the fairy skipping about from flower to flower in high spirits was Melby enjoying the flowers' fragrance.

I made a rectangle with my fingers and captured that scene within the frame.
Yeah, it's a nice sight.
It's too bad I don't have a camera.

I wanted to look at it indefinitely, but unfortunately there wasn't much time.

I squat down beside one of the palm-sized cacti and carefully dug it up from the ground using the knife at my waist, leaving the roots intact.
Then, I gather the surrounding sand using [Earth Spirit Magic] to make an impromptu potted plant.
While I'm at it, I use [Carving] and add a simple ornament to the circumference of the potted plant with my knife.
A carving of cacti, flowers, and a fairy.

Melby floated to my side unnoticed and peered at what lay in my grasp.

"——Here, take it."

Saying this, I presented the potted plant to Melby.
I was worried about a place to hide it, but Melby should be able to put it away in the dimension storage.

"E-eh……?"

"With this, you can look at it any time you like, right?"

"Ah…… r-right."

Melby stowed the potted plant away with [Dimension Magic].

“Well then, sorry but we’ll be rushing back.”

I descend from the rocky mountain with [Psychokinesis].

“O-kay…… um, thank you.”

“You’re welcome.”

I reply while running through the wasteland as if jumping, using [Psychokinesis] and [Leap].

“If we get the chance, let’s come look at them again.”

“Y-yes.”

“Remember this place, okay?
Ah, Melby has no sense of direction so that’s probably impossible……”

“H-how rude!
I may be a tiny bit ignorant about geography, but I do have a sense of direction!”

“A tiny bit?”

“Muu~!”

In the morning sun, we returned to the big hole in the Nest in a great hurry while making trivial conversation like that.

I was supposed to not get fatigued thanks to [No Fatigue] but this time, it gave me a very nice, refreshed feeling.

——That’s right, after returning to the Nest, I suddenly thought of using [Appraisal] on the cactus.
This was because I thought I might be able to grasp the cultivation trick.
In doing that,

《Rainbow Cactus: A succulent plant of the Cactus genus. Only inhabits special regions In the desert known as “attribute pools”. Grows by absorbing the mana in its surroundings, and the flowers it blooms changes colour depending on the attribute absorbed. Means “Indestructible Friendship” in the language of flowers.》

The first half was also on my mind, but the important bit was the last line.

It was a little too good to be true.

42. Hunting

"——I was originally an adventurer,"

Fellow believer Nebil says as he walks beside me.

I am currently outside the Nest.

That said, it's not like I was escaping.

In the Nest, we sometimes go out to hunt monsters.

This is because hunting monsters is the easiest way to raise our levels.
Furthermore, skills are raised faster when they are used in actual combat.
This is something that is well known to <Yatagarasu> through their experiences as a combat-oriented group.

But then, I still have a few questions.
Monsters are formed by the evil god bestowing power unto living creatures on the earth through a curse, so isn't it strange for the emissaries of <Yatagarasu> who serve the evil god to lay their hands on the monsters?
As one would expect, I couldn't ask anyone about this so I felt a little depressed.

Come to think of it, the emissaries of <Yatagarasu> who clearly side with the evil god also have their levels and skill levels raised with experience; I wonder if this was based on the goddess' samsara system.
Or, did the evil god's side also have a similar system?
However, disregarding me being on the goddess' side and the others, like Gazaine, who were neck-deep in the religious organisation being on the evil god's side, I wonder how the guys who were brainwashed emissaries without ill will like Elemia and Miguel from the children's group were handled.

There was no limit to these questions no matter how much I pondered in my mind so I can only try asking the goddess when I see her next time.
Our meeting last time was too abrupt so I wasn't able to prepare that many questions, but this time I'll prepare the questions and keep them in mind; I'd like to ask everything I should ask about, using my time to the fullest extent.

I wasn't able to drop by the Samsara Temple in Fauno city in the end, so I didn't manage to obtain the [Prayer] skill that the goddess spoke about.
Actually, I tried to pray to the goddess when I saw an opportunity even inside the Nest. I don't know if there was some kind of special condition or something, but it didn't result in the acquisition of [Prayer].
Perhaps it really did have to be at the temple, or a particular offering needed to be prepared, or possibly even some kind of special ritual like the bow twice, clap twice, bow once more ritual done at Shinto shrines was needed.
Those were the possibilities I thought of.

Melby said that she had no knowledge about that kind of thing either.

Now, I was talking about the monster hunting.

A few days ago, under Gazaine's supervision, a report came in about wyverns appearing near the Nest.

To give you a rough explanation, wyverns are a type of flying dragon classified as a sub-dragon, and although they don't have a breath attack, they're considered high-ranking monsters due to their high mobility and sharp claws and fangs —— B Rank monsters.
A B Rank monster is on par with a single B Rank adventurer.
Being on par means that a B Rank adventurer can also lose if their luck is bad.
Thus, a party of adventures at B Rank or above is necessary to kill a wyvern safely.

Now then, wyverns are troublesome even alone, but they have a habit of calling companions together and living gregariously.
Moreover, the entire dragon species, not just wyverns, are lair-builders — they either dig their own holes underground or use pre-existing holes.

If wyverns have started building a lair near the Nest, they would be liable to dig through underground and connect the lair to the interior of the Nest.

Of course, the elites of our <Yatagarasu> shouldn't be inferior to the flock of wyverns, but there was the danger of a part of the Nest collapsing due to the wyverns' lair-building.

Also, if the wyverns were to build a lair near the Nest and fly about in the sky, they were bound to stand out.
There was even the possibility of the adventurer guilds in the neighbouring towns ——Fauno City for instance—— viewing them as a problem and sending people out to clear the wyverns' lair.
If that were to happen, the discovery of the Nest's existence would be unavoidable.

——Actually, I did send an emergency message to Alfred-tousan via Melby about the wyverns who were flying about like advertising balloons.
I wonder if my mother, an A Rank adventurer, will come out on an immediate search since the wyverns would be nothing to her.

Or perhaps I should say, after thinking about it again, Julia-kaasan would be able to take down the wyverns safely, even on her own.
She's an amazing person, my mother.

Oops, rather than that, back to Fellow believer Nebil.
Fellow believer Nebil, a regular of my Okonomiyaki shop, has completely let down his guard against me recently and even tells me stories of his past like this.

"Even like this, I climbed all the way to C Rank.
Well, I was with a party though."

“Oh……. Then why did you join <Yatagarasu>?’

“I was injured in the middle of a quest.
It had just been a trivial goblin subjugation, but there had been a lot of goblins.
Among the arrows that were fired, there was one that was well-aimed.
It was probably just a fluke since they’re goblins, but the arrow got lodged in my foot.
My party members, who I should have been on reasonably good terms with until the day before, all scrambled to flee and I, alone, was left behind.
The one who saved me at that time was an emissary of <Yatagarasu>.
See, it was Gazlow-san… no, Fellow believer Gazlow of the Special Forces.”

“Gazlow……”

So it’s that guy with the sly-looking eyes.
I can’t see him having a trait of saving people at all.

“After that, I was given medical treatment at the private <Yatagarasu> holy residence.
Since it was back then, it wasn’t the “Crow’s Nest” but the previous holy residence.
Thanks to that, the after-effects of the arrow have mostly disappeared.
That’s why I decided.
To use this life they saved for the sake of <Yatagarasu>.”

Saying that while smiling, Nebil’s face was really cheerful.

“But if you were an adventurer, wouldn’t you have heard rumours of <Yatagarasu> at least?”

“Ah, indeed, I haven’t heard of any positive rumours outside.
But rumours are rumours after all.
People won’t understand without actually encountering them.
If you try listening to Gazlow-san’s words, isn’t he saying that Evil God-sama is actually a good god and is fighting the devils?
Gazlow-san said that saving my life was also a result of Evil God-sama’s guidance.
When I learned that, I also aspired to be an emissary.”

“What do you think about the sacred tasks?
That…. about killing people.”

When I ask that, Nebil scans the surroundings before saying in a whisper,

“Because it’s you, I’ll be frank.
I don’t really understand it.”

“About what?”

“What Evil God-sama is like, stuff like that.
I simply wanted to return the favour.
I never fail to attend the organisation’s religious service but, honestly, I can’t understand the

teachings very well.
I think that Gazaine-san and Archbishop-sama's remarks make sense though."

Nebil's speech seemed to contain some hesitation.

"Fellow believer Nebil becoming an emissary was before Gazaine…. sama became the head, right?"

"Right, that's right!
A lot has changed since Master Gazaine became the leader.
Master Gazaine was pleased with Gazlow-san and let him enter the special forces, and I also became a member of the special forces thanks to his support.
Lately, Gazlow-san…… how should I put it……"

There, Nebil paused.

"——Hey, Fellow believer Orochi.
Do you believe in Evil God-sama?"

A difficult question suddenly came flying.

Seeing Nebil's serious face, I realised instinctively.
If I lied here, I would lose Nebil's trust.

I hesitated only for an instant, and deliberately plunged into danger.

"……No, I don't believe in him."

"Is that so……"

Nebil mutters.

"I see."

Nebil says, sinking into silence.

At a time like this, I can only wait.

Fortunately, we had been moving in groups of 2~3.

The number of people recruited to subjugate the wyverns total 20.

With Special Forces member Nebil as the leader, there were a few youths assigned to each team.
There were five people from the children's group participating: Miguel, Elemia, Donna, Beck and me.

Having the children play a central role was because this wyvern hunt was not just an extermination, but also served to level up the youths.

Especially because Donna and Beck from the children's group were preparing for their first sacred task as emissaries next month; it seems they wanted to raise their levels as much as possible so they could avoid any unforeseen situations.

The reason I was called here was probably—— not because I was part of the children's group, but it was likely a test to see whether or not I would run away.
When I use the [Sense Presence] skill I acquired recently, I sensed a few very restrained human presences a fair way behind us.
They're probably emissaries of the special forces under Gazaine's orders.

As the youngest, I was put under the custody of the leader and was mobilised together with Nebil.
Elemia, who was also a member of the special forces, was also grouped with us, but she had been sent ahead to scout and wasn't here right now.
This was because Elemia, at only 7 years of age, has learned both [Sense Presence] and [Espionage Techniques].

The wyverns were reported to be setting up a lair in a hollow located a few kilometres northwest of the Nest.
Since the environment was all wasteland with no obstructions, the emissaries of <Yatagarasu> who specialised in covert activities made up the core, approaching in a manner where they wouldn't be visible even from the sky.
Separated into small groups, we draw closer while moving under cover.
Nebil sent <Yatagarasu>'s characteristic signal of tongue clicks, then made preparations to storm into the lair.

Incidentally, the emissaries were not wearing their usual jet-black crow outfit this time, and instead wore on a sand-coloured cloak over their standard equipment, so that it was hard for the wyverns to detect them from the sky.

Nebil slipped into the cover of another rock ahead and beckoned to me.
I used [Stealth Steps] and followed Nebil.

"……I'll say this since you answered so honestly.
Frankly speaking, I'd like to cut ties with this organisation."

I was quite surprised.
I had thought Nebil was a rather pious believer.

"I'm only speaking up because it's you, but…… I'm not the only one who thinks that.
……Saying this much, you understand the rest, right?"

"Yeah……"

There are others who feel the same as him.

"But with our abilities, we're no match for the organisation's elites or the members of the special forces.

I'm also part of the special forces, but I got in with my scouting and intelligence gathering abilities instead.
It's different to the combat geniuses like Elemia.
Even so, Elemia is only 7 years old. We can think of a few methods to pin her down.
The other elites too, it would be dangerous if they came in swarms, but we can probably manage if we make a surprise attack.
However…… Gazaine.
For him, I can't think of any ways to escape him safely, let alone ways to win."

I was surprised yet again.
I never thought that Nebil had planned such a concrete campaign against the religious organisation.

"So, how about it, Fellow believer Orochi?
No… Edgar, wasn't it."

"……How about what?"

"Don't play dumb.
If it's you, can you win against him?
You can think of countermeasures, right?"

Called into question, I pondered for a short while.

—— Countermeasures against Gazaine.

Naturally, I've repeated countless simulations but I still haven't hit upon a reliable method of winning.

Previously, I likened the training with Gazaine to fighting games.
A truly strong player would see through all of the clever schemes thought up by an amateur, and moreover would deal a severe counterattack.

However ——

"……I'll need a little longer, I think."

At my words, Nebil raised his eyebrow.

"Heh! I see. That's good."

"……You don't doubt me?"

"Apart from me, the special forces are a bunch of monsters.
Only Gazaine is different and stands out.
And, I think, that you, Edgar, are also outstanding in a different sense
After all, you were acknowledged by Gazaine himself.
Saying that the only one who has the possibility of killing him is《Boundless》."

《Boundless》.
He was referring to the nickname《Boundless Orochi》.

“You’re overestimating me so much that it’s making me uneasy…… but I’ll try.”

“Heh.
It’s reassuring if you’re saying that.
I —— We will be patiently waiting for that moment.”

Saying that, Nebil peers further ahead from the cover of the rock.

In Nebil’s line of sight, a thumbnailed-sized lump could be seen several hundred metres ahead of here.
It was brownish-grey and was around 3 metres tall, considering the distance, with angular bits here and there.
It was hard to tell because its wings were folded but that was our target, the wyvern.

The wyvern was crouching by the edge of one of the chasms in the ground that often appeared in this vicinity, and it was languidly suspended inside the chasm from its neck to the tip of its head.
It would roar occasionally but…… What was it doing?

“……Just one?”

Nebil mutters anticlimactically.
Certainly, the information we received was that several wyverns were building a lair.

Light flickered from the cover of rocks in the vicinity of the wyvern right after we identified it.
The emissaries we had deployed had sent signals by reflecting sunlight with pocket mirrors.
When the lights flicked from a total of five places, Nebil spoke.

“Fellow believer Orochi, we’ll commence once Elemia returns.
It probably has other companions, but we can’t just abandon this chance when it’s alone.”

“Understood. ……But,”

“Hm? What?”

“Where did Elemia go?
Even though the wyverns’ location is right over there.”

It was strange that we didn’t see Elemia, who had been sent ahead, while heading to the wyverns.

“……!”

In a fluster, Nebil visually compares the wyvern with the rock cover where the emissaries

were hiding.
Then, returning his gaze to the front, he looks past the wyvern, towards the chasm and——

ROOAAAAARRRRRR!

Together with multiple roars, several wyverns came flying out from opposite the chasm where it had sunken in a little and couldn't be seen.
The wyverns that suddenly appeared swooped down from the rear of the emissaries who had circled behind the first wyvern.
As expected of the assassins of <Yatagarasu>, they returned fire despite the chaos, but the wyvern's hide was tough and knives wouldn't damage them at all.

The attacked emissaries were masters of [Throwing Spear Techniques] and [Throwing Axe Techniques], but both skills were hard to use in melee combat.
In accordance with established tactics for fighting wyverns, restrictive nets were also brought but they targeted occasions when the wyverns were on the ground. Once the wyverns took flight, the nets couldn't be used until after they were pulled down to the ground again.

Then, the wyvern that had been crouching at the beginning attacked as well.
The crouched dragon used its gigantic claw to lift a large boulder that was directly below it and tries to drop it on the disordered emissaries from overhead.

"H-hey, Fellow believer Nebil!"

"——ck ! Everyone, begin the attack!
Retreat as soon as we rescue Gonzack and Lazarre!"

Seeing that there's already no point in hiding, Nebil gives an order.
From the cover of rocks here and there, the emissaries who were wearing identical sand-coloured cloaks to mine stood up and fired magic spells and knives at the wyverns to attract their attention.

I levitated a nearby boulder with [Physics Magic].
I would be able to levitate it easier with [Psychokinesis] but that is one of my trump cards so I don't want to reveal it.

Anyway, I threw the magically floating boulder at the aforementioned wyvern that was carrying the large boulder.
It seemed that even this kind of action was affected by [Throwing Techniques]; my boulder followed the intended trajectory and hit the wyvern's leg.
The dragon couldn't bear it and dropped the large boulder it had been holding.
The large boulder fell into the chasm that the wyvern had been crouching by at the beginning.
I couldn't see the situation below from here, but from the fact that a loud boom sounded, the chasm seemed deeper than I had thought.

"Well done!"

The emissaries were moving even while Nebil said that.
Reaching the sides of the emissaries who had been first attacked ——Gonzack and Lazarre—— they divert the airborne wyverns with their respective specialised attacks, such as magic and throwing knives.
The magic was merely《Flame Bit》, and the knives lacked the ability to leave any injuries either, but they appeared to be able to keep the wyverns at a distance at least.

The emissaries assembled in a circular formation and slowly made their way here while keeping the airborne wyverns in check.
Behind Nebil and I, there was a small grove with various trees and shrubbery, and further behind that was a rocky mountain with cactus-like thorny trees growing here and there.
The wyverns seemed to dislike those trees so if we ran over there then we could reorganise our formations.

Right when we thought we could reconvene after withdrawing another one hundred metres, Elemia returned.
In regards to where she could have been, she had sprung out from the bottom of the chasm the wyverns had been in at the beginning.
She soundlessly ran the distance from the chasm to our location at full speed.
I wondered just what had happened, as the sand-coloured cloak she should have been wearing was gone.
Elemia, who had run through the wasteland with her short, silver hair fluttering about, stopped in front of Nebil.

Elemia wasn't breathing heavily, but Nebil grasped at his heart in suffering instead.

I see, it's [Fatigue Transference].
There's no effect on me, who has [No Fatigue], but I suppose this is what it does.

Breathing heavily, Nebil asks about a separate subject as if he had known about Elemia's skill as well.

"Gh…… Fellow believer Elemia! Where did you go!?"

It's understandable considering the situation, but Nebil's words were a little pointed.
However, Elemia did not falter at them and instead shouted out with a snap.

"——This isn't a wyvern nest!"

"Huh!? What are you saying! When several wyverns have already appeared——"

"Like I said, the wyverns aren't the problem…… it was there!"

"What was!"

Right when Elemia was about to reply to Nebil, the ground shook.
No——

“It’s slanting!?”

The edges of the chasm spread out to the left and right.
At the same time, the ground where we were formed a large depression, and a fissure ran along the perimeters.

Then, suddenly a flame gushed out from that fissure.

“W-wha——”

While I was lost for words, Elemia exclaimed.

“A firedrake! This is a firedrake’s nest! A Firedrake has been living underground in this area!”

“F-firedrake!”

Nebil’s face drains of colour.

“Everyone, fall back!
Withdraw!”

At Nebil’s words, the emissaries start running this way.
Fortunately, thanks to the flame just now, the wyverns had fled into the sky.

However, that wasn’t the problem.

Because of the flame, the ground we were standing in completely collapsed, moreover, it started slowly inclining towards the chasm.

It couldn’t be —— it had been gouging out the earth we were on in its entirety from underground with the flame from before——?

In that case, that would mean the firedrake was quite an unbelievable existence.

But luckily, the progression of the landslide wasn’t that fast.
The disciplined emissaries’ legs should be just fast enough to let them escape in time.

Or so I thought, but,

“——Kyaa!”

“Fellow believer Donna! A-are you alright!?”

“I-idiot! Don’t just stand around!”

Beck rushed over to the fallen Donna, whereas Miguel wavered before also rushing back in the end.
What Donna tripped on was a broken piece of the boulder I had thrown at the wyvern earlier.

And at that moment, the nearby ground suddenly sloped even more and the landslide increased in speed.

"——Shit!"

"F-Fellow believer Orochi! You won't make it!"

"Idiots, come back! Fellow believer Orochi, Fellow believer Elemia!"

Elemia even followed me when I leaped out.
Nebil stretched his arm out in a hurry but wasn't able to catch Elemia.

I extended the steel thread wrapped around the gauntlet on my left hand, and bind Donna, Beck and Miguel together.

"Kyaa!"
"Uwahh"
"Uooh!?

"Elemia, hold onto me!"

"Y-yes!"

The landslide finally transitioned into a pitfall and we were cast into the air.
I wound the thread around the three children and drew closer, and supported the bodies of the three children and myself, as well as Elemia who was clinging to me, with [Psychokinesis].

However, our inertia was greater than I expected, and no matter what sort of legendary class skill it was, I wasn't able to levitate five humans in such a short time.

"ck——"

Despite it seeming like we would be half-engulfed by the landslide, I recklessly move my fingers and cast a barrage of [Earth Spirit Magic].

"I will help too!"

The invisible Melby also called out to the earth spirits using [Spirit Magic] and had them avert the mass of rock, earth and sand that came assaulting us.

Even though it should only have been a moment, it felt like a terribly long time passed.

I doubt the battle against the earth and sand even lasted ten seconds.

Melby and I succeeded in creating a ball of rock around the five of us.

That rock sphere was swept away with the incredible force of the landslide and in the end, it split right into two with a terrible smashing sound.

Although I was able to bypass the majority of the impact by levitating our bodies with [Psychokinesis], there was still a whiplash-like shock.

Without waiting for it to quieten down outside, we crawled out from the wreckage of the rock sphere and checked the situation.

It seems as though we had fallen to the bottom of the chasm.
We were at the bottom of a deep ravine, in the midst of earth and sand and lumps of rock that was raining down incessantly from above with a tremendous force.

"——Over there! Quickly!"

Elemia shouts, pointing to a section in the rock face.

What looked like the entrance to a cavern was there.
Anyhow, we should currently be heading somewhere where we can avoid the things flying at us from above.
We rushed towards the cavern.

The landslide instantly followed after.

The noise stopped once, but immediately after that, a hot wind blew through the cavern for an instant, and the thunderous roar of the landslide resounded once more.

Or rather, this, if we did this clumsily, wouldn't we be escaping into the path of the firedrake's breath……?

"Ah, it's alright.
The firedrake's on the opposite side so its breath shouldn't come this way…… probably."

Said Elemia, seeing my expression.

"Probably?"

"Y-yeah……
According to what I heard in my hometown, firedrakes use their breath to make their own lairs.
At those times, it first uses its breath to hollow out a deep pit in the middle and then builds its lair with that as the core.
And from inside that, it release their breath in all four directions to shape the surroundings of its lair."

"……Wouldn't it loose its shape that way?"

"I heard its breath is hot enough to easily melt boulders, but the firedrake uses its breath to melt the space underground and change the shape of its lair, then waits for it to cool down and solidify.
Apparently when a firedrake matures, it even utilises the nature of its breath to make a

complex labyrinth in the vicinity of its burrow.
A few of the so-called “Dungeons” that exist throughout the world are firedrake nests with magic beasts residing in them.”

Oh.
That much was never mentioned in the『Abaddon Magic Compilation』.

“And so, when you consider our position in relation to the burrow, this place should be a dead angle of the breath.
Its breath is released diagonally-upwards from the burrow, so with this location so deep, even if the breath should pass by above our heads, it won’t be a direct hit…… I expect.”

Elemia says, a little lacking in confidence.
Her tone was unsure but I feel that what she said makes sense.

Then, Miguel cuts in.

“……But if the breath passes by diagonally above, doesn’t that mean it would harden diagonally above us and encase us?”

“……”

“……”

Elemia and I were speechless.

Miguel’s reasoning was so logical that I was surprised…… a little, but rather than that, the content of what he said was an issue.

I hurriedly rushed to the entrance we came from but,

Boom!

There was a large noise, and a huge rock closed off the entrance.

Ugh, not yet!

“Ω ∨——《Tunnel》!”

Don’t make light of the [Earth Spirit Magic] tempered from the relic excavation and creating the ducts!

By means of my magic, a large hole was opened right in the centre of the huge rock.

“Ooh!”

Miguel gave a shout of joy.

Fufu, how is it.

With a satisfied look, I stuck out my chest, then——

Gloop——

With a shimmering flash of light, the large hole I opened vanished along with the huge rock.
Wait,

“R-retreat!
Retreat inside!”

There was no need for me to say it, the four children also started to run after seeing the lava streaming from the entrance.

We retreated into the seemingly naturally-formed cavern in desperation.

After following the winding path around several bends, we stopped hearing any noise from behind us.

All of us sunk down to the floor and let out a large sigh.

……Even I who shouldn’t tire, did the same thing just now.

I took a gulp of the water in the canteen hanging at my waist and then rose, cautiously returning the way we came.
Miguel and the others followed me in silence.

The lava had been blocked by a turn in the path.
It was still dark red but it should harden after a little while.

For the time being, we escaped being swallowed up by the lava and dying but,

“——Err. Did we just get shut in?”

In response to Donna’s words, I nodded solemnly.

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43. Firedrake

A heavy silence descended upon our surroundings.

“Hey, Fellow Believer Orochi.
Can’t we get out by using that [Earth Magic] you used before to dig a hole?”

Miguel asks me.

“It’s not like I can’t do it, but I can’t tell what the firedrake has done to the ground around here.
If I were to carelessly dig in a bad direction, the tunnel could end up collapsing and we would be buried alive.”

I heard that there was an incident like that at the excavation site in the Nest before.

Although, if I were to use the hardening magic (Concrete) that I used to reinforce the ducts with in conjunction with《Tunnel》, it should be fine.
But although I trusted the children’s group for the most part, I don’t want to show too many of my cards.
If I were to be asked how I managed to get out afterwards, it would probably be hard to play dumb.

“Th, then, what are we gonna do?
I don’t want to be stuck in a place like this with no food.”

Says Beck, the glutton.
Miguel makes a shocked face, but Beck does actually have a point.
Since we were hunting close to the Nest this time, we only brought two days worth of rations.

“For now, let’s try exploring this cavern.
If we can find another exit then that would be good, but if that’s no good then we’ll get as close to the surface as possible and use《Tunnel》.”

When I said this, the four showed relieved expressions.

“……Sorry, everyone.
This is all because I fell…”

Donna said, looking dejected.
Her cute dog ears were also lying flat on her head.

“Don’t worry about it! We’re comrades because we help each other out, right!”

Miguel says cheerfully as he firmly pats Donna’s shoulder.

"……Though the one who saved us wasn't Fellow Believer Miguel, but Fellow Believer Orochi instead."

"Gu-……"

Miguel's speech is cut short by Elemia's retort.

"Now, I have a suggestion. How about making Fellow Believer Orochi our leader just for now? After all, the most calm one right now is Fellow Believer Orochi, and the only one who can judge whether to use [Earth Magic] is also Fellow Believer Orochi."

The current leader, Miguel, sharply opposes Elemia's proposal.

"Ee-!? I mean, Fellow Believer Orochi is still a kid, ain't he!"

"……That's a fair point.
But I've come to believe that it would be better not to judge Fellow Believer Orochi by his appearance or real age.
I'm already tired of being surprised by him……"

Eremia murmurs the last part.

"I agree."
"M, me too……"

After Beck and Donna agree as well, Miguel approves it, albeit reluctantly.
Thus I've become the temporary leader for this team of stranded children.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

Now, let's see the statuses of the children.

First is Miguel.
A rascal with short red hair.
It's fine to think of him like a protagonist of some shounen manga.
He often comes picking fights with me, saying stuff like "be my sparring partner".

《Miguel Mittelt (<Yatagarasu> Group 1 member | 《Wonder Child》)
Age 9
Human

Level 19
HP 31/31
MP 17/17

Skills
・Legendary Class
[Qinggong] 4 (By adjusting the flow of energy within one's body via the use of a unique

breating method, one can control their body movements to an extent that nears the limits of the human body.)

・Master Class
[Unarmed Martial Arts] 3
[Assassination Techniques] 1

・General
[Assassination Skills] 9 (MAX)
[Unarmed Combat Skills] 9 (MAX)
[Leap] 6
[Stealth Steps] 5
[Keen Hearing] 5
[Night Vision] 3
[Dagger Techniques] 3
[Dual Sword Techniques] 1
[Farsight] 1
[Shuriken Techniques] 1
[Knife Throwing] 1》

Surprisingly, Miguel is the owner of a Legendary Class Skill.

Due to [Qinggong], Miguel's movements are truly phantasmagorical.
He would be the type to pressure his opponents with his [Unarmed Martial Arts] while toying with them — an in-fighter; a person specialised in close quarters combat.
The fighting style reminds me of Son Goku.
If he were to jump at me from close range, I wouldn't be able to deal with it.
On the other hand, he doesn't seem to be good at handling throwing-type weapons, as the skill that everyone is taught in <Yatagarasu>, [Knife Throwing], is stuck at level 1.

Next is Elemia.
Although there's no need to point it out, she is a tomboy with short silver hair and tanned skin.
However, her appearance is too noble, so she doesn't look like a boy as much as she thinks she does.

《Elemia Lotteroot (<Yatagarasu> Special Forces member |《Shrine Maiden of the Dark Forest》)
Age 7
Dark Elf

Level 21
HP 30/30
MP 67/67

Skills
・Legendary Class

[Fatigue Transference]—(Transfers one's fatigue to the people in the vicinity. Perpetually active.)

・Master Class
[Espionage Techniques] 4
[Sense Presence] 4
[Assassination Techniques] 2
[Discern] 1

・General
[Assassination Skills] 9 (MAX)
[Shuriken Techniques] 5
[Dagger Techniques] 4
[Night Vision] 4
[Darkness Magic] 4
[Unarmed Combat Skills] 3
[Knife Throwing] 3
[Light Magic] 3
[Mana Perception] 3
[Leap] 2
[Farsight] 2
[Wind Instruments] 2

《Blessing of the Dark Forest》(Medium compensation to the acquisition of skills (including magic) related to sensing presences and concealment .)》

As always, it's a status unbefitting of a seven-year old child.
Although I feel like she would say "You're one to talk."

Incidentally, it has been three years since Miguel and Eremia were dragged into <Yatagarasu>, so they would be the seniors in the children's group.

And Donna.
She is a fair-skinned girl with floppy dog ears and uniquely braided, moderately long, black hair as her trademark features.
Although it doesn't really look like it, she is also the oldest in the children's group.

《Donna Harsha (<Yatagarasu> Group 1 member)
Age 11
Therianthrope (Moon Dog Race)

Level 18
HP 30/30
MP 34/34

Skills
・Legendary Class

[Super Olfaction]ー

・Master Class
[Microscopic Observation] 4
[Compounding] 4

・General
[Mixing] 9 (MAX)
[Keen Hearing] 7
[Water Magic] 4
[Telekinesis Magic] 4
[Stealth Steps] 4
[Night Vision] 3
[Mana Perception] 2
[Darkness Magic] 2
[Dagger Techniques] 2
[Assassination Skills] 1
[Unarmed Combat Skills] 1
[Knife Throwing] 1
[Tool Creation] 1》

Rather than her athleticism, Donna's role is to use drugs made by [Compounding] to obstruct enemies and provide support for allies.
Although she's the oldest out of all the children, including those who aren't here, it's because she wasn't well equipped with the physical prowess required as an emissary.
Even though when you think of beastmen you would normally have an image of someone with high physical abilities, Donna seems to have a higher aptitude for manufacturing-type skills that make use of her superior senses.

In regards to [Mixing], I tried asking Gazaine to teach it to me but,

"——Like I could teach that to a dangerous guy like you."

I was refused.

Although everyone made it out of the landslide with only minor injuries, Donna applied the medicinal herbs she had on hand to treat our injuries.
Since it's not like I could ask Melby (she is still here), I'm glad that she is here.

The final one is Beck.
He was a boy with a sturdy build and cropped blonde hair as a distinguishing feature.
Since he's over 140 centimeters tall despite only being 8 years old, he will undoubtedly become a giant in the future.

《Beck Warne (<Yatagarasu> Group 1 member | 《Small Vajra》)
Age 8
Human

Level 15
HP 29/29
MP 16/16

Skills
・Legendary Class
[Protect] 4 (Letting a God's power dwell in your stance, you protect your allies by using your own body as a shield.)

・Master Class
[Toughness] 2
[Super Strength] 2

・General
[Greatshield Techniques] 6
[Battleaxe Techniques] 4
[Stealth Steps] 3
[Assassination Skills] 3
[Woodcraft] 3
[Earth Magic] 2
[Dagger Techniques] 2
[Throwing Spear Techniques] 2
[Keen Hearing] 1
[Night Vision] 1
[Knife Throwing] 1 》

Although it feels like there aren't enough offensive skills, [Protect]'s ability is amazing.
《Stance of the Iron Wall》 has a strong effect, reducing all frontal damage to 0.
But then again, Beck still can't use《Stance of the Iron Wall》.
But in exchange, it seems like he can use《Stance of the Mad Bull》, a skill which makes his upper body invincible and gives him the superhuman strength to take on an enemy's attack.
Although it's amazing, it's hard to use.

Rather than that, he can probably use [Super Strength] and [Toughness] without having to determine the situation.
If he were to train, it seems like his status in the future would surpass that of Goleth without《The Evil God's Curse of Calamity》.

On a side note, Beck is also my [Woodcraft] comrade.
In contrast to his build, he is good at precision crafts.
Technically speaking, although I should be better as I have a higher skill level, since our passion for details seems to be different, I often think that the finishing quality of my products is no match for his.
Well, I seem to have digressed a bit.

……Now then, you should understand by looking at it like this, but this group of children is actually rather superb.

Although to begin with, the children's group is made up of unique skill-wielding children kidnapped from here and there by Gazaine.
Their original talent was increased through <Yatagarasu>'s training, and their stats were raised enough so that they were more than able to handle the adult emissaries.

If I am able to dispel their brainwashing in the future, it might be fun to become adventurers together with this party of five.
But before that——that is something for after we get through this predicament.

That said, I wonder if we could actually beat the firedrake with this lineup?

Let's try asking Melby-sensei.

"Hey, around how strong is the firedrake?
Do we have any hope of beating it with these guys?"

"Let's see……a dragon's strength varies depending on its age, but as long as it's not an extremely young dragon, I think it would be pretty tough for these children?
Even if you're there with them.
To defeat a firedrake, it would take a small military troop."

"You can't help, right?"

Melby, as a fairy, is under constraints that prevent her from intentionally causing harm to another person.

"Since dragons aren't monsters, it's impossible.
Though it's possible for wyverns, a dragon subspecies.
Although I can protect you if it comes down to it, I can't aggressively attack."

"In other words, it's an enemy that can be reasoned with?"

"Yeeah……while there are some elder dragons who can understand human language, it's impossible for most dragons.
But fundamentally, as long as you don't trespass in a dragon's territory, dragons usually won't take the initiative to attack."

"Then what was that before?"

"Like Elemia said, that was merely the firedrake building a lair.
If the firedrake felt like attacking seriously, it wouldn't have ended as lightly as that."

"So we've got no choice but to run, huh.
Luckily, we still haven't entered the dragon's territory yet, have we?"

"That's right. Since the area around here hasn't become part of the firedrake's lair yet, there shouldn't be any problems as long as we don't encounter it unexpectedly."

Okay, I've received Melby-sensei's guidance.
Although I was worried about what would happen at one point, it seems like we'll be able to get through this somehow.

——Or so I thought, but…….

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

One hour later.

"——Hey, Fellow Believer Orochi."

「What is it?」

「……We're heading downwards right now, right?」

「Yeah……unfortunately.」

There was no need for Miguel to point it out, I already knew.
The cavern we were in gently sloped downwards while occasionally curving at sharp turns.

On top of that, the state of the cavern suddenly changed midway.
The space in the cave widened greatly.
As if——yes, like even a firedrake with a large frame could pass through.

「This is… the mark of a firedrake, right.」

Elemia said as she investigated the wall.

The reason the cavern walls have hardened in a wave-like shape is because that is what remains after they have been melted by the firedrake's breath and solidified after cooling down.

In other words, this is already part of the labyrinth made by the firedrake.

"How troubling."

I guess there's no way other than to turn back and use《Tunnel》and《Concrete》to make a passageway identical to the ducts, huh.
But, if we were to do that, that would lead to the conversation topic of why I didn't do that from the beginning.

But, it's not like I can fight the firedrake with these guys.
No matter how strong the skills in their possession were, if they failed to dodge even a single breath attack, that would be the end.
And it's not like we can guarantee a zone that was safe from its breath like in games.
If it were to breathe out in a narrow space, we would be unable to dodge and end up disintegrating.

I made a decision after hesitating for a bit.

——I guess turning back would be best.

It's a bit shameful as a leader, but I won't compromise our safely.

It happened when I stopped walking and opened my mouth.

"……Something is coming."

Elemia said.
Although I also have the same [Sense Presence] skill as Elemia, it seems like Elemia is better at reading presences.

"What is?"

I turn back and ask Eemia.
Elemia's face pales in an instant.

"Fellow Believer Orochi……be, behind you……"

Miguel says in a hoarse voice.
I incrementally turn my head around to look back.

——Our eyes met.

I met eyes with the **firedrake** that extended its neck around the corner.

"……Re-"

"Re?"

"Retreat!"

The four ran away at full speed at my words.

ROARRRR-!

Then, the firedrake releases its breath towards us..

"Ku-……! Ω (Gaia) 乙(Circle)——《Stone Wall》!"

Using [Earth Spirit Magic], I make as many stone walls as I could in one go, then follow the four.

The moment we finished turning the corner right ahead of us, an intense heat bursts out from behind.
When I turned around with a shudder, I saw that the corridor had turned into a red hot sea of lava.

Past that, I look at the seemingly pleasantly-smiling firedrake and—— [Appraisal].

《Firedrake
Level 11
HP 4539/4539
MP 692/712

Abilities (Innate ability. Can be strengthened through a Gift or Curse depending on the proficiency level.)
Flame Breath ★★☆☆☆
Acid Spray ★☆☆☆☆
Flight ★★★☆☆
〔Passive (A passively invoked ability.)〕Detoxification ★☆☆☆☆ (Decomposes harmful microscopic substances within the body.)
〔Passive〕Strong Immunity ★☆☆☆☆ (Degrades harmful invasive microbes within the body.)
〔Passive〕Regeneration ★☆☆☆☆ (By consuming magic energy, damage to the flesh is recovered.)

Skills
・General
[Stealth Steps] 7
[Night Vision] 5
[Dragon Limb Combat] 3
[Dragon Claw Techniques] 3
[Dragon Scale Defense] 2 》

There seems to be a lot of issues to retort at, but now isn't the time for that!

"π (Aqua)・乙 (Circle)・∨ (Spread)・卜 (Flame)——《Ice Wall》!"

In the space between us and the firedrake that looks as though it will send another breath attack, I deploy an original ice-making magic at full strength and block up the passageway.
I also set up a《Stone Wall》in front of that just in case.

"Run, run!"

As I rush the four, I energetically dash to the next corner.
The instant we turn the corner, I hear a terrific explosive sound from behind but I ignore that.

While we are outside of the firedrake's field of view, I dig a hole with《Tunnel》in the shadow of the crags.
Although I've made the entrance narrow so it doesn't stand out, the inside should be be decently spacious.

"Come in here!"

As I yell out, I take the initiative to slip into the hole.
While I widen the hole with《Tunnel》, I confirm that the four have properly entered.
Afterwards, I go up to the hole we entered through,

“Ω (Gaia)・乙(Circle) ——《Stone Wall》”

and fill it in with [Earth Spirit Magic].
Then, I signal for the four to hide their presences.
Thanks to the training style of <Yatagarasu>, the four immediately erase their presences in accordance to my hand signs.

Of course, I also erase my presence and use [Sense Presence] to check the state of the area outside the hole (though it’s a wall now).

The firedrake approaches with loud footsteps that torment my heart —— then, just like that, the footsteps fade away.

It seems like we managed to get it to bypass us without incident.

“……It seems we’re alright for now.”

When I say that, the four of them let out sighs of relief in unison.

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44. The Firedrake's Lair

"……How troubling."

"Mhm……"

"Yeah……"

"Yea……"

"I'm hungry……"

Elemia, Donna, Miguel and Beck all gave half-hearted replies to my mutterings.
Only Beck's response was unknown as to whether it was a reply or not.

"Ed, Ed."

"Hm? What?"

"The firedrake from just now, it seems like it's gone quite far away."

"How do you know?"

"Because I can't hear the voices of the fire spirits that surrounded the firedrake."

I also concentrated and tried to listen to the voices of the spirits; it certainly seems like there aren't any fire spirits nearby.

"If you're able to do that, I wish you would have said something before we came across it."

"I thought you were already doing it.
Besides, the spirits in the ground were in disorder because of its breath so I couldn't immediately tell it was coming near.
Since having a lot of fire spirits around after the breath attack wasn't strange either."

"Also, I don't know why but that firedrake also seems to possess [Stealth Steps].
Why the hell would a dragon know something like skills……"

"Oh, skills aren't really exclusive to humans in particular, you know?
Fairies, dragons, and monsters will acquire skills if they've accumulated enough experience.
The firedrake having [Stealth Steps] might be a little unusual though."

"Was that so….."

"Putting that aside, if you're leaving this place, now is the time to do it."

“But, we’ll encounter it if it comes back, right?”

“Nevertheless, won’t it be dangerous even if you stay here indefinitely?
Having entered its lair means there’s the possibility of its breath being sent over here too.”

“We can defend against it if its breath comes flying, right?”

“Can you?
Just then, its breath deviating away from the entrance was also thanks to me making a request to the fire spirits.”

“Was it……. Wouldn’t we have died there if Melby wasn’t here then?”

“That’s right. Shouldn’t you be grateful?”

Melby puffs out her chest in pride.

Huh? But I’m sure Elemia said that it’s breath shouldn’t hit us, based on our position in relation to the lair?

Well, Elemia hadn’t seemed that confident though…….

Anyway, I’ve decided what we should do, now that it’s become like this.

“——Everyone, please listen.
It’s a little dangerous, but I’m going to use《Tunnel》and dig a passage to the surface from here.
There’s also a chance of it suddenly collapsing, but it’s better than coming across the firedrake.”

If I use the hardening magic《Concrete》in addition to《Tunnel》, there should hardly be any collapsing.
The other emissaries might inquire about it later, but between concealing the scope of my power and safely fleeing from the firedrake, I’ve decided which one takes priority.

I quickly set to work but,

“——Please wait, Fellow believer Orochi.
I object to that plan.”

Unexpectedly, Miguel declared that.

“Hey, you couldn’t be saying you want to try fighting that firedrake, could you?”

“No matter how I am, even I wouldn’t be saying that.
Not that, Since the firedrake has left its lair right now, I think we should scout out the inside of its lair.
From the start, our task this time was the investigation of the wyverns setting up their lairs

near the Nest.
The firedrake being here was outside our expectations but ——no, it's exactly for this reason; it'll be bad if we don't examine the scale of this lair."

"Mhm….."

Miguel had a point.
The Crow's Nest might face a great crisis in the distant future if we ignore the firedrake now.
Scouting out the scale of this lair to confirm whether the Nest's underground establishment was in danger of being connected or not makes sense.

"Fellow believer Orochi, I'm also in agreement with Fellow believer Miguel.
I heard that firedrake lairs have multiple exits.
Hence, if we avoid the path the firedrake took just now and advance towards the interior, there's also a chance of being able to come out to the surface from another exit.
In that case, there's no need for Fellow believer Orochi to take the risk and dig a tunnel using [Earth Magic]."

This time, Elemia endorsed Miguel.
I can dig a tunnel without risk if I use《Concrete》, but since I said "there's the danger of collapsing" at the beginning, it's hard to refute it.

"I-I am also in favour of the reconnaissance.
The residence where everyone lives would be in trouble if it became linked to the firedrake's lair.
Even if there's a little bit of danger, it's better to check the situation."

Donna also agreed with the reconnaissance.
It was quite unexpected, but I often see Donna taking care of the little kids in the children's group.
"For everyone" were the magic keywords to move Donna.

"I think I'll support Fellow believer Orochi.
It looks like the lair was just finished, but there might be other monsters like the wyverns around.
There was a large error in the information we first received so I think we should retreat first, then seek instructions from Fellow believer Nebil."

Only Beck was in agreement with me.
It was a very Beck-like view, since he had the role of shield and was expected to protect the party members.

Now then, the majority is three against two.
Of course, it wasn't as though I couldn't claim the right as the leader and make returning the priority but, leaving Donna aside, it doesn't seem like Miguel or Elemia would assent to that.

"……I got it.
The firedrake isn't here for now, so let's scout out the inside of its lair.

Then from there, search for another exit and escape.
——That fine?”

At my words, the four gave small nods.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

We decided on the actions to take in the emergency situation of being chased by the firedrake, then set about scouting out the firedrake’s lair.
I don’t think there would be any monsters in the newly-built lair, but the wyverns we encountered outside might be there.
Taking up a line formation with Elemia at the head, followed by Miguel, Donna, Beck, and finally me at the rear, we advanced to the lair.

The inside of the lair was pitch-black.
Everyone possessed the [Night Vision] skill but unlike my [Darkvision], they can’t see anything when there’s absolutely no light.
Thus, Elemia and I, the vanguard and tail, cast ∩ (Light) at our respective lowest intensities to maintain a minimal amount of illumination.
This was done smoothly, having been beaten into us from <Yatagarasu>’s special education for gifted children.

The sand-coloured cloaks stood out all the more within the darkness, so we took them off and left them in the first hole.
Also, the bulky items such as the wyvern-catching nets were discarded as well, prioritising agility.

Elemia being at the head was, of course, due to the value of her scouting ability.
Miguel, with his high combat ability, was positioned so he could jump out from behind Elemia at any time.
I was at the rear to be on the watch for the firedrake’s return, and I was to use all the magic I could to buy time if it did return.
Beck, who was in front of me, was assigned the role of covering for the combat-weak Donna at times of need with his characteristic defensive ability.

Melby, who was invisible to everyone, listened carefully to the voices of the spirits, to spy on the movements of the firedrake.

It wouldn’t be strange for the firedrake to return from behind us at any time.
That said, we weren’t in much of a haste, as there was also the risk of the monsters that may be inside taking us unawares.

We continued at a steady march.
I, who had [No Fatigue] was another thing, but Donna and Beck who still had little experience as emissaries seemed quite tired.
Elemia seemed unfatigued thanks to [Fatigue Transference], but the nearby Miguel probably had Elemia’s share of fatigue transferred to him.

I did tell Elemia to put some distance between us, but if she drifted too far away, we wouldn't be able to provide support at the critical moment.

Then, Elemia stopped abruptly.
Using hand signs, she signaled to us who were following to erase our presences, then using [Espionage Techniques] and [Darkness Magic] together to completely extinguish her own presence, she peeked inside from a corner.

A few seconds later, with even more caution than at the start, Elemia returned to our side.
Naturally, she didn't commit any mistakes like kicking a stone and making a noise or things like that.

"……It's there."

Elemia's words were direct.

"You say it's there…… What is?"

Miguel asked quietly.

All of us couldn't believe what she said next.

"A **Firedrake**."

"……Huh?"

"A firedrake was there. Also, this firedrake is larger than the one from before……!"

Elemia said, her face pale.

"……Melby, can you sense them?"

"The fire spirits? Uh uh……It doesn't seem like they're there……"

Melby said with bewilderment.

"If it's you, Melby, could you approach it without being noticed and use [Appraisal]?

Her skill level was lower than mine, but Melby also possessed [Appraisal].

"I wonder……
It's a firedrake without any fire spirits, right…..?
If it's not a corpse, that would mean it spoke to the fire spirits and told them not to stay near it.
Perhaps it even rounded up the spirits to help with the construction of its lair?"

“H-hey….. Are you saying that firedrake can use [Spirit Magic]?”

“It’s… possible.
If so, it should be a fairly old firedrake.
I can’t deny the possibility of a firedrake like that noticing my [Appraisal].
Rather, Elemia did a good job of not being discovered.”

“Then, it might be dangerous to even be talking here.”

“Yes. Let’s quickly leave this place.
Of course, take great care not to be noticed.”

Ending the mental conversation with Melby, I turned to face the four children.

“……Anyhow, let’s leave this place.
We found out that such a big thing is there.
That’s enough of a result for our reconnaissance.
After this, we should survive and bring this information back to the Nest alive.”

This time, no objection was voiced.
However,

“But, which way do we go……?
Until here, the cavern was one straight path.
Even if we returned, wouldn’t we come across the first firedrake……?”

Elemia said worriedly.

“For the time being, we’ll return to the place we were at before we started descending.
We’ll dig a tunnel, hide the entrance, then dig a hole to the surface from there.
Until that point…… We can only pray that we don’t meet the firedrake.”

“In that case, I’ll be the vanguard and scout.
Once I confirm the firedrake’s position, I’ll return immediately.
If it’s nearby then we’ll bypass it with Fellow believer Orochi’s [Earth Magic].”

Scouting is probably necessary.
I think we’ll know about the firedrake’s approach because Melby is here, but there is the chance of the fire spirits separating like they did with the firedrake inside.

“Got it.
Be careful.”

“Of course.”

Elemia cautiously returned down the path we came.
Miguel, Donna, and Beck, the three children and I who were left behind exchanged hand signs and altered our formation, then followed after Elemia.

We were separated from Elemia, the scout, and the smaller firedrake was in front, so this time I stood at the vanguard, followed by Beck, Donna, and then Miguel in that order.
Whether it be the hand signs from just now, or the covert movements with no rustling of our clothes, <Yatagarasu> 's training was as expected.

As I advanced with caution, I address Melby.

"I thought it was somewhat strange, so the one building the lair was that larger firedrake."

The breath flying towards where Elemia promised was safe had been because the firedrake Elemia identified before the landslide was the smaller one.
From the position of the smaller one, the breath wouldn't reach that point, but the bigger one was in a deeper location so its breath reached that far.
Even though the firedrake should be inside its lair, suddenly coming across a firedrake (the smaller one) was also because a different dragon to the one building a lair—a smaller one—had come to inhabit the lair.

"Perhaps the smaller one is the child of the bigger one.
The fire spirits gathering at the smaller one may be because the bigger one asked the fire spirits to watch over the smaller one."

"They could also be there to keep watch, but the firedrake could simply be marking it.
If the bigger one is a user of [Spirit Magic], then it could know the location of the child dragon by listening to the voices of the fire spirits."

I solved the mystery, but the situation didn't change.
After progressing for a short while, we returned to near where we encountered the first firedrake.
The passing of time felt longer than when we were leaving.
This was because we had been marching whilst holding our breaths.

We were able to see the back of Elemia, who had gone ahead, at the end of the cavern.
From inside the cavern, an anxiety-inducing *thud thud* sound resounded.
No doubt, it was just ahead.
I produced hand signs telling the three behind me to stop and had them wait there.

While doing that, Elemia noticed us and sent some hand signs.
They were—— Leader. Only. Come. Here.

I use [Espionage Techniques] to approach Elemia.

(Look)

Elemia conveyed, only moving her lips.
I only sent half my face around the corner and looked at the other side.

There it is.

Furthermore——

“It’s enraged……”

Just like Melby said, the (small) firedrake was in a rage.

The firedrake was in front of the hole we had hidden and let it go past in.
We purposely didn’t fill in the hole after we left it but ——it failed.
The firedrake thrust its head into the hole, dragged out the sand-coloured cloaks and wyvern-catching nets and such that we had discarded, and used its fangs and claws to tear them into pieces and trample on them.
It seemed very irritated at being deceived.

“……It might not pass a second time if we use the same method.”

Even if we retraced our steps and dug out a hole midway, the firedrake probably wouldn’t be tricked again.

Filling in the dug hole would be, of course, done from the interior so it wasn’t possible to confirm the completion of the exterior.
Perhaps, it would form a wall that seemed out-of-place and would be noticed immediately if the firedrake looked attentively.
And, the firedrake’s speed of detecting was probably faster than our rate of hole digging.
It might be too narrow for it to enter but it sending a breath at the hole was enough to fear.

In that case, we can preparing ourselves, exposing ourselves once, and slip past by the firedrake’s flank while heading towards the cave entrance ——wait, the entrance was buried by the bigger one’s lair-building breath, wasn’t it.
Could I have the others buy me time to dig through using《Tunnel》?
Without losing someone as sacrifice to the firedrake?

I thought these guys might be able to manage, but it became a complete gamble.
If I went ahead to dig with《Tunnel》, I wouldn’t be able to be there while the firedrake fought the four children.
I don’t want to hear about so-and-so dying or anything.

Isn’t there any good moves to make?
While taking care not to reveal my presence, I kept a sharp eye on the firedrake and frantically looked around.
Then,

——Alright, I can only do that.

I retracted my head from around the corner and asked Elemia to keep a lookout while I crouched and summoned the three trailing behind with hand signs.
Taking care not to let my voice leak to the firedrake’s side with [Wind Magic], I explain the strategy.

“Yet another absurd tactic.
But I suppose that’s all you can do.”

Melby commented.
The four children also approved of the strategy, albeit surprised.

“——Alright, everyone must survive and return.”

At my words, the four gave tiny nods.

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45. Breaking past the Firedrake! A Fight to Advance!

"Let's go!"

Without even needing me to voice the words, the four children silently dash forward in response to my hand signal.
They headed towards the firedrake.

I had everyone employ [Stealth Steps] but, as expected, even the firedrake would notice them once they approached its vicinity.
When the firedrake gave a wary growl, the four split into two groups.
Elemia and Beck went to the firedrake's right and Miguel, dragging Donna along with him, headed towards the left.

As for me, I sprinted after the children and continue charging straight at the firedrake even when the four separate.
Naturally, the firedrake turns its attention to me, the one in front.

There,

"∩ ∨ ——《Flashlight》!"

I compressed the duration of the spell to an instant and produced a high-intensity ∩ (light).
Of course, my eyes were shut and I had one hand covering them.

Gugyaaa!?

The blinded firedrake shrieked.
Using that opening, the four children slip past the firedrake and move to their predetermined positions.

Meanwhile, I slide under the dragon's belly as I use [Psychokinesis] on the wire hook that Melby had taken out for me, sending it forward.
The hook passes beneath the dragon's belly and twines around the torso of Beck, who was standing on the other side.
Beck had already taken a stance with his waist lowered and both arms thrust out at an angle — the《Mad Bull Stance》.
He wouldn't be thrown off balance so easily because he had the [Toughness] skill as well, or so he said.

There is an added mechanism on the hook that wasn't there the last time I used it, back when I slipped out of the Nest for Melby's sake.
A reel is attached to the wire of the hook so it can be wound.
I wind the reel with [Psychokinesis] and succeed in slipping underneath the firedrake before it moves.

Then, I circled behind Beck.

“ΩルΩル ――《Stronghold》!”

With a four-symbol activation, earthen walls form around Beck’s lower body.
Because I went so far as to use four symbols to consolidate it, it shouldn’t collapse easily.
At the same time, Melby also made a request to the earth spirits asking them to strengthen the walls as much as possible.
I don’t know what happened exactly, but the exterior face of the walls dissolved into a toffee-like state and then hardened in the same way as a mineral.

At that moment, the firedrake finally turned this way.
Its eyes converge to focus on us.
Either its regeneration ability had kicked into action, or it never received a serious wound in the first place.

When I glanced back to check my rear flank, I saw that Elemia, Donna, and Miguel had already run through the cavern and their figures were now disappearing behind a bend.
That corner wasn’t directly in line with Beck and the firedrake, so they would be safe from attacks.

I retrieve some separation barrier fragments from the leather pouch at my waist that I used specifically to store them, and throw them at the firedrake’s head in succession.
I thought they would be repelled by its scales, but the fragments tore the firedrake’s hide to pieces.

The firedrake glares at me, its eyes burning with anger.

Then, it inhaled deeply.

“Beck, Melby!”

“I’m alright! Wait, who’s Melby?”

“I’m fine!”

I could hear the shrill voices of the fire spirits.
The emotion that dwelled within the voices was――delight, I suppose.

Right after the glint in the firedrake’s eyes sharpened, an intense radiance surged out from within its throat.
Practically the only thing that could be seen from directly in front was an explosion of light.

The ray of light was partially deflected upwards through Melby’s intervention, but even so, it remained on a direct course towards Beck’s torso.
Below the earthen walls, I lay face-down in Beck’s shadow as the super high-temperature ray passes by and directly engulfs Beck’s upper body.

Although I knew that this《Mad Bull Stance》would turn one’s upper body invincible through a godly power, this spectacle was still bad for the heart.

Even if his upper body was invincible, wouldn't he still be harmed by the high heat of the breath attack since his lower half is regular flesh and bone?
With that thought in mind, I had tried to check on Beck before the dragon attacked and learned that "it would be fine as long as he took the blow with his upper body".

The breath attack engulfed Beck's upper body and continued to extend past us, mercilessly melting the cavern wall.

We were exposed to the breath attack for what seemed like an eternity, but then it stopped.
All that remained after the attack were us, the firedrake, the charred remains of the earthen walls, as well as the new red-hot cavity that had opened up behind us.
Furthermore, light from the outside could be seen within the cavity, although the simmering hot air that remained from the firedrake's breath attack did made it a bit hazy.

There—

"Ω、Ω、Ω、Ω!"

With all my might, I cast [Earth Spirit Magic] and create minimal scaffoldings to stand on.
The cavity was still hot, but the emissaries of <Yatagarasu> should be able to run through it at least.

Elemia and Miguel, who was carrying Donna, returned from further inside the cavern.

"It's done! Let's go!"

Heeding my words without sparing time to even nod, the two advanced down the "path".

"Fellow believer Beck, you should hurry too!"

I shouted out to the sole remaining person, Beck.

However, he didn't respond to my call.
Instead, he just stared fixedly at the firedrake without even budging from his place before the earthen wall.

"Beck!"

"—Go on ahead, Fellow believer Orochi!"

"Huh!? What are you saying!"

"I will hold it back here! If I don't, you guys won't be able to get away!"

The firedrake once again inhales in preparation for a breath attack.
Seeing that, Beck breaks into a run towards the firedrake.
Upon noticing Beck approach, the firedrake interrupts its breath attack to stomps down on him.

“Beck!”

I thought he had been crushed, but Beck employed the《Mad Bull Stance》once again and firmly caught the dragon’s foot.

“After all, I am Vajra Knight Dikreos Wawn’s son!
As if I could leave my comrades and turn my back on the ENEMY!!!”

Beck gives a warcry as he slowly forces back the dragon’s foot which he had stopped.
Despite its initial surprise, the firedrake repositioned its other legs and put even more force behind the foot crushing Beck.

Now would be the time to run away, but how could I do such a thing!

“Ah geez! What an unwelcome favour that is!”

I retrieved some separation barrier fragments from the leather bag that was hanging on my waist, and then threw them at the firedrake’s leg.
I was sure they would be repelled by its scales this time, but the fragments managed to easily pierce through its hide.
Really, just what are these fragments?
Incidentally, the stock of fragments that had diminished when I retrieved them from the leather bag was secretly replenished by Melby.

The firedrake groans viciously as it stumbles.
Meanwhile, Beck slipped out from underneath the dragon’s foot.

“What do you mean by an unwelcome favour, Fellow believer Orochi!
No matter how you look at it, it would be better to have Fellow believer Orochi survive rather than me!
<Yatagarasu> needs you more than me!”

“As if I care about that!
Life is not something you can just throw away so easily!
If you died, Mona, Pingu, Mitchell, Cat’s Eye, Mole, Dog, and the others, everyone… everyone would mourn for you!
Everyone! We’re all returning to the children’s room together!”

Cat’s Eye, Mole, and whatnot were the names given to the children in the Nest.
Most of the names, including mine, tended to relate to animals, as though Gazaine couldn’t be bothered to think up new names every time.

“I can’t do that!
Someone has to stay behind to hold back the firedrake!”

“That’s why I said I’ll do it!
Even in a one-on-one battle, I would be the one with the highest chance of survival!”

“You can’t be sure of that, right!?
No matter how strong you are, Fellow believer Orochi, you can’t guarantee that you won’t be done in by the firedrake!”

“Like I said—”
“That—”

“WHAT ARE YOU DOING!!?”

The sudden shout caused Beck and I to flinch instinctively.
Somehow, I felt that even the firedrake, which had been extracting the fragments with its mouth, seemed to be surprised.

The one who interjected in our unsightly argument was neither Miguel nor Elemia——

“Donna! Why did you return—”

“I’m here too!”
“Me too!”

When I turned around, a red-head and a head of silver ran past on either side of me.
Carried by the momentum from rushing back through the passage to the outside, Miguel strikes at the firedrake as Elema throws her knives.

“We’re going to stop it here!
Donna, go scold those two idiots!”

“O-oi, what are you saying?
Why did everyone return!?”

When I unintentionally flared up,

“Fellow believer Orochi and Fellow believer Beck, this way!”

Donna said that, grasping at the napes of Beck and my necks and pulling.
Of course, we could shake ourselves free if we became serious, but we couldn’t oppose Donna’s intensity. With her dog ears now erect instead of laying flat as they did normally, Beck and I were dragged further into the covers of the cavern.

“Beck-kun!
Why didn’t you obey Orochi-kun’s decision when he was elected the leader by everyone!”

It seems she was greatly agitated, as she attached ‘-kun’ to our names instead of ‘Fellow believer’.

“B-but I’m the son of a Vajra Knight…”

“That’s irrelevant!
I supported Orochi-kun’s strategy because it was a method where everyone could be saved!

I would definitely have opposed if Beck-kun needed to be sacrificed!”

“Uu, ah……”

Beck mumbled, his eyes darting around.
Having talked Beck down, Donna instantly turned to look in my direction.

“Orochi-kun too!
I’m also to blame because I agreed, but I never heard that it would be this dangerous!
Didn’t you say you would immediately follow behind us!?”

“N-no, I did intend to properly follow after you guys….
But Beck, this guy……”

“Don’t lay the blame on others!
Because I can tell when I see it!
Orochi-kun, you thought you would fight the firedrake alone, confine it as long as possible, and take it down if you got lucky, didn’t you!?”

“Uh…!”

With her hitting the mark, I was at a loss for words just like Beck.
I didn’t think as far as taking it down, but I did think that the firedrake might be surprised and run away if I used one or two of my secret weapons.

“M-melby, does Donna possess [Fairy Eyes] or something?”

**“There’s no way that’s it.
It’s girls’ intuition.”**

So it’s a girl’s inherent ability.
Please include that in the status.

“Why do you have to do it alone, Orochi-kun!?
Why don’t you rely on us, Orochi-kun!?
Even I, even Elemia-chan, even Miguel-kun… even though we all want to help Orochi-kun, why don’t you direct us!?
Why didn’t you ask us to buy you time so you could dig with《Tunnel》!?
Are we that unreliable!?”

“Ah, no, that is….”

Indeed, that might be the case.
Even without doing the tightrope act of inducing the firedrake’s breath attack to create a path, having the four earn time for me to dig with《Tunnel》would have been a much safer way of escaping.

The reason I didn’t do that was because I was worried about the four fighting against the

firedrake without me.
I certainly intended for all four of them to return alive, but on the other hand, I also doubted their strength.

This might be humiliating for them when they were fired up about their mission as emissaries and polished their fighting strength.

“Sigh… that’s right.
Thank you, Donna
It’s just like you said.”

Even as I was being scolded like this, Miguel and Elemia skilfully continued to evade the firedrake’s attacks.
Was if for <Yatagarasu>’s mission?
——No, it was for the sake of the companions they lived together with.

“Beck. I’m sorry.
It certainly seems like I didn’t try to count on your strength.
It was impolite to the《Small Vajra》who was able to withstand the breath attack and catch the dragon’s foot.”

“N-no, I should be sorry too……
Even though I know that what Fellow believer Orochi said was right…”

Donna watched over us apologising whilst nodding her head.

“So, we shouldn’t stay in hiding right now at least. Let’s go.”

Saying that, I have Melby take out the new arms I made in private.
It was a large shield made by layering many sheets of the duralumin excavated from the historic relics and compressing them.
With a height of 2 metres and a width of 1 metre, it was downright heavy and just as sturdy.

“Beck, use this shield.”

“This is— an amazing shield.”

I had staggered about with it when I handed it over, but Beck set it up without a care.

“B-but, this… where did you take this out from just now?”

“That… I’ll explain it later when we have time.
If he has that, not only could he stop the dragon’s trampling from just now, wouldn’t he even be able to stop its claws or fangs?”

“Y-yeah! Of course!”

Beck nodded, full of confidence.

It was only his upper body that was invincible, so I worried about whether his lower body would be crushed by the dragon's body weight if he were to be trampled, but it seems like it didn't turn out that way at all.
At the same time, Beck took care to avoid taking on the dragon's claws directly.
In short, the arrangement was that he would remain unhurt if he was able to "stop the blow" but he'd take actual damage if he were slashed into pieces or pierced.
It seems that taking the breath attack was also considered "stopping the blow", so he was fine even if the high heat blew against the lower half of his body.
There wasn't any hot air radiating towards me as I lay below him either.

Why did it turn out like that?
Please ask the god who granted Beck his power.

"But don't take it on directly even by mistake, okay?
Also, it hasn't been strengthened by magic so it'll melt like normal if it takes a breath attack."

"It's fine. Because I've been taught how to handle a shield by my father."

"I see… seeing your father and the others… it'll be good if you can see them again."

"I wonder about that……
I have to forget about such things beyond working as an emissary."

"……I see.
I'll leave the defence to you, Beck.
But, just that is no good.
We have to attract its attention.
——Donna."

"Y-yes!"

Donna made a salute-like action by reflex when she was called so suddenly.
It was probably a salute from the moon-dog tribe.

I don't know where the vigour from just now went. Perhaps she felt refreshed after venting, but Donna returned to her usual obedient self.

"No, you're older than me so just act normally.
Acid or gunpowder is fine, Donna, do you have anything that can attract that guy's attention?"

"I do have some firecrackers made from dried Ususake Mushrooms….."

"Eh? Usuake Mushrooms can turn into firecrackers?"

"Yeah. You didn't know?
That's why we cultivate so many in the Nest."

“Crap……
I used it in the okonomiyaki as a substitute for katsuobushi.
Nebil was fond of it and told me to pile on lots, but I wonder if that’s really okay.”

“Fufu. It’s fine as long as you don’t eat too many.
Even if you overeat, the worse it gets is being unable to stop hiccupping.”

“No, that’s pretty terrible……
Wait, we’re not talking about that.
Donna, you stand behind Beck and throw the firecrackers to attract the firedrake’s attention.
Beck, protect Donna.
However, if that guy shows signs of unleashing a breath attack, take refuge behind me.”

“Got it.”
“I got it.”

Elemia and Miguel were fighting the firedrake even as the two were nodding.

Elemia skilfully attracted the firedrake’s attention with her throwing knives and Miguel struck from behind the firedrake in that time.
However,

“Take that! ……Owwwwww!”

Miguel jumped back, his hand dangling limply.
Despite hitting hard with his sturdy gauntlet, it seems the one who incurred damage was Miguel instead.
As for the firedrake, it appeared to only give a fleeting glance at Miguel before losing interest.

“Damn! If only I could use internal strength like grandpa……!”

So Miguel’s grandpa can use internal strength.
That’s amazing. I’d very much like to study under him.
For Miguel to be able to use [Qinggong] was plenty amazing though.

Elemia continues to throw knives and throwing needles, aiming at places without scales or the gap between scales like the base of its teeth or claws.
The firedrake appeared gloomy so it seems that it wasn’t ineffective, but she didn’t seem to be able to cause much damage.
When I tried using [Appraisal],

《Firedrake. Level: 11, HP: 4488/4539, MP: 451/712. 》

As far as it goes, there was some effect.
Compared to Miguel, whose blow didn’t get through at all, it could be said that she was putting up a good fight.

The firedrake let out an agitated cry and tried to catch Elemia with its teeth and claws, but by that time, Elemia had already retreated outside the firedrake's attack range after leaving behind an afterimage created with [Darkness Magic].
That said, it wasn't too far away.
If she distanced herself completely, the firedrake would prepare another breath attack, so she is steadily accumulating damage while maintaining a reasonable distance.
I see, so this is what Gazaine meant by calling her a "genuine prodigy".

That said, Elemia was still unable to hide her nervousness before the firedrake that boasted an overwhelming offensive ability.
Observing her opponent's attacks and countering with her own——even for just that, she put her life at stake each time.
Her fatigue was transferred to the firedrake so there was no chance of her tiring and becoming unable to move, but there was the possibility of the mental strain sapping at her attentiveness.

There, Donna threw her handmade firecrackers.
There was no physical damage, but it still seemed to surprise the young firedrake. Glaring at Donna, it charged towards her, creating tremendous vibrations as it moved.

Just before the dragon swung its foot down with all its strength, Beck managed to wedge himself in between the two and diverted the blow away with the large multi-layered duralumin shield.

The firedrake's stance was greatly disturbed when its foot was sent in an unexpected direction.
A rumbling sound resounded in its stomach and its upper body crashed into the wall of the cavern.

In that interval——

"Melby!"

"Kay!"

Melby retrieved a gigantic coil that was 3 metres in height and roughly 50 centimetres in diameter from her dimension storage.
Underneath the coil was a cart that I had forcibly welded and attached.
Of course, both were artifacts from the historic remains.

On that coil, I scribbled a great number of ξ (Thunder) symbols.
I also wrote ∃ (erase) next to the ξ (thunder) but only the ξ were invoked first.
Magic symbols that weren't invoked would lose their effect after ten seconds, but that was enough for now.

"Alright! Charging complete!"

"——Everybody, get away from that guy!"

I signaled to everyone with my voice, and to Melby with [Telepathy].
Beck and Donna might be put in danger so I told them to flee with my signals.
Elemia and Miguel were distanced from the firedrake.
We do something similar when invoking large-scale magic in the group fights in <Yatagarasu> so the four's retreat was smooth.

"Understood! Here we go!"

Melby retrieved "something" from her dimension storage in conjunction with her reply.
After a brief moment, I invoked ∃ (erase).
The "something" Melby had retrieved vanished once it appeared by the mouth of the electrified coil.
No——it was discharged.
A terrifying sound and shock rushed through the inside of the cavern.

Gigyaaaa!

In one of the wings of the crying firedrake——a red-hot *rail* had pierced through.

The four children turned their head in my direction whilst gaping; I suppose they were unable to comprehend what had just happened.

Using ξ (thunder) to imbue the coil with an electric current, I create a magnetic field.
Then, I throw the magnetic rail into the proximity of that magnetic field.
The rail is attracted by the magnetic field.
The rail is set inside the magnetic field with that, so I cut off the electric current with ∃ (erase).
When I do that, the rail flies out of the coil at a great speed with the attractive force provided by the magnetic field—

—Right, this is an improvised coil gun.

It was necessary to rescind the electric current the moment the attractive force was mounted onto the rail, but I was able to devise the timing comparatively easily thanks to a correction applied via [Discern].
It was easier than the Quick Time Event combo in fighting games.

By the way, although I used a rail, it wasn't a rail gun but rather a coil gun in regards to the mechanism.

I saw a prototype of a coil gun in an online video in my previous life.
I only have a vague recollection of it, but the theory is simple.
This was done on the spot, without any experimenting within the Nest, but it looks like it went well somehow.

Growing red-hot from the friction caused by air resistance, the rail pins the firedrake's wing to the wall of the cavern.

“H-hang on!
I never heard anything about it being this powerful!?”

Melby said in a flustered manner.

Ah, I see.
If she knew beforehand, Melby’s “investment” might be considered harming another.
Passing me the fragments was fine so I had thought this would be fine too.

Or, was that the reason I missed the firing target?
If that’s so, I might not be able to fire a second time.
In that case, I’ll pitch in with [Psychokinesis] after the rail leaves the magnetic field——

No, this isn’t the time to be thinking about this kind of thing.

“Hey! We’re fleeing at once!”

I call out to the stupefied children.
While the firedrake is unable to move, we hurriedly exit outside through the the tunnel.
Fortunately, the red-hot “path” had lowered in temperature, albeit only the surface, and was in the process of becoming the engraved rock that was the mark of the firedrake.
The four quickly started to move.

However, it was just a little bit late.

Gugu…… Guaaaaaoh!

The firedrake gave an agony-filled cry and took a deep breath.
As though it had lost itself from the pain, an ominous noise came from its throat as it finished preparations for a breath attack at a much faster pace than before.

Crap!
It doesn’t seem like I’ll be able to protect everyone if this place collapses!

“Tch…. I have no choice but to do it!”

I again pour an electric current into the coil and have Melby retrieve a rail——

It was at that moment.

I “listened carefully” this time, so I knew.
The fire spirits call out in shrill voices.
The direction they came from was—— diagonally below.
It’s the larger firedrake that was further inside!

“Oh fire spirits, save us from that menace——!? They’re not listening to my words!”

Melby, who tried to interfere with the incoming breath attack, screamed.
I also tried to ask the fire spirits, but the (large) firedrake’s breath attack drew closer to us

without my request being granted——

VROOOSH——

The cavern was dyed in shimmery light.

The breath attack passed between us and the firedrake (small).
Seeing that breath attack, the firedrake (small) swallowed its breath, interrupting the breath attack it was about to release.

I also halted my preparations with the coil.

——That breath attack just now was a warning.

It was the larger firedrake telling us that it could kill us here.

Then, a low voice echoed through the cavern.

《——I'll have you stop there, dear visitors.
Both you—and my child—never had any reason to quarrel from the start, right?》

The firedrake (small) emitted a "Grrr….." in dissatisfaction, but it didn't seem to have the intent to defy the larger one.
It pulled out the rail that was stuck in its wing with its mouth and tossed it towards the interior of the cavern provokingly.
The rail was still red-hot but, as expected of a firedrake, it didn't seem to be harmed by the heat.
The hole opened in its wing also closed up in a twinkle.

《Now, dear visitors.
Although I am unable to give you a great reception, I do have a request.
Please enter our lair.》

Although it was polite, those words were a command.
We exchanged looks—— then nodded to one another.

46. Dialogue (Firebird)

We turned back on the path that we first went down then came up, and started descending to the inner parts of the nest.
We thought of going through the big hole that the parent firedrake opened, but humans don't consider a space with four still red-hot walls a path.

Looking at it like this, the hole that the offspring firedrake opened towards the outside some time ago looks like child's play.
This one has almost twice the diameter and what's most important, that one's walls started cooling down and hardening within a few minutes.
Indeed, with only this much firepower, it couldn't have made a nest this big yet.
Then again, it has enough firepower that would've been enough to kill us instantly without Beck's【Protect】.

This time we descend without using【Stealthy Steps】, but I can't say we don't feel nervous this time either.
The reason for that is that the offspring firedrake is following while keeping an eye on us——and also, beyond this point is the parent firedrake that Eremia witnessed.

While soaking our〈Yatagarasu〉uniforms in cold sweat from the inside, we turned the corner where we turned back last time.
From there it's a straight line to the dwelling place of the parent firedrake.
In the dwelling place, there were a few bonfires burning.
It's plenty bright even without【Dark Vision】.
Illuminated by the flickering flames, the large build of the parent firedrake came into view.
Since it's too big, we can only see up to its chest from here.
Even with just that it's about twice as big as the offspring firedrake.

I felt that someone gulped.
I don't know if it was Eremia, Donna, Beck, or maybe everyone.

"B-big….."

Miguel said, almost groaning.

The offspring firedrake makes a 'gugyaa' sound behind us.
As an answer to that the parent firedrake lets out a low sound.
Most likely they were knock and 'come in' signals.

We step into the dwelling place of the firedrake.

"Fu-fuwaaa….."

Looking up at the parent firedrake, Donna lets her voice leak out.

The parent firedrake had a body height of about 7 meters.
If it extended its head, then it would most likely reach over the fortress walls of Ranzrack

Fortress.

Also, there was a wyvern being held in its mouth.
It's mealtime, apparently.

The firedrake spit out the wyvern towards its back and turned its gaze that gave off a feeling of intelligence in our direction.

《I was thinking that the fire spirits were restless, it turns out that we had some unexpected visitors.》

The parent firedrake's voice resounds in my mind.

It's moving its mouth too, but the words and the way its mouth moves is mismatched, it's like I'm watching a dubbed foreign movie.

"Ca-cannibalism……?"

Donna said with her hand in front of her mouth.
It was only in a small voice, but it looks like it reached the ears of the firedrake.

《Cannibalism? You say some strange things.
These are our livestock.
They are living carefree lives under our protection and in exchange they consent to becoming our food from time to time.》

"I-is that so……."

I whispered as I was taken aback.
I don't really get the feeling of wanting to be protected even at the cost of being eaten, but if I'm told that, then I can only answer with an 'is that so'.
I guess cattle and pigs don't run away from humans either.

《Well then, humans.
I have to ask you some things.
Me and my offspring migrated here after confirming that this place is far from any human residence.
Why are you in this place?
Was there a community of people nearby?》

"Yes. There is community of humans living underground in a place not far from here."

《Why do you live in an inconvenient location such as this?
I heard that humans can't live a comfortable life without commerce.
If you especially live in a place like this then…… are you a group of sinful people that were rejected by other humans?》

"That is……"

That is exactly the case, but I was at a loss on how to answer.

《Fumu…..》

At the same time as the firedrake mumbled, a surprising【Appraise】came flying.
I reflexively repel it.
However, the other four besides me didn't even realize that【Appraise】was used on them.
Only Eremia stirred a bit, but it looks like she didn't realize what it was that was done to her.
The firedrake must be confirming the Statuses of the four of them, it's nodding and from time to time lets out a sound.
If it were a human, it might have been mumbling 'fumu fumu'.

It didn't take long for the firedrake to think it over.

《I mostly understand the situation.
You are the most dangerous one.
To think that you would repel my【Appraise】.
If I underestimate you based on your looks I might have a painful experience.》

The firedrake says this while observing me.

"Nah, I'm a genuine 10 months old baby, just as my looks suggest."

""""No way, no way!""""

The four of the youth group retort with perfect harmony.
You all sure get along well.

《——Also, the small one that is hiding there.
If you don't mean any ill will, then show yourself.》

The eyes of the firedrake are gazing in the direction of Melby, who is currently staying on my shoulder.
Oh boy.

"*…..what should we do?*"

"*Can't be helped, I guess.*"

After I nodded Melby showed herself.
The one who was surprised by Melby's sudden appearance was not the firedrake, but the four of the youth group.

"——I'm Melby. A fairy, as you can see.
Due to reasons, I'm traveling with Ed currently."

"F-fairy-san……!?"

Donna looks startled and she is looking back and forth between Melby and me.

“You still had an ace in the hole like that, huh, Fellow Believer Orochi.”

Miguel said.

“Sorry about that. She was with me since before I was taken to〈Yatagarasu〉, but the top brass of〈Yatagarasu〉can’t see her apparently, so I had her stay hidden.”

“The top brass can’t see fairies……?”

Eremia said like she was surprised.

I should say that as expected of a dark elf, Eremia looks like she knows about how ‘Evil people can’t see fairies’.
Looking at her expression, it looks like Donna also knows about it.

“At any rate, fairies aren’t able to hurt people, so she can’t help with the Sacred Duties of〈Yatagarasu〉.
I thought it was best to have her hide her presence to avoid troublesome situations.”

Even I think it sounds very much like an excuse.

“I get it now.
When Fellow Believer Orochi was talking to himself from time to time, it was you talking to Melby-san, right?”

Eremia said like she came to understand something.

Sorry, Eremia.
That was merely me talking to myself.
Since I’m speaking with Melby with【Telepathic Communication】.

《Nevertheless, we generally don’t attack human children indiscriminately.》

“Ah, we know that.
This time it was our fault for stepping into the nest without permission.
Even though it was unavoidable, I also apologize for hurting your child.”

I answer like that as our representative.

《Those are the words of someone who is accompanied by a fairy, there is no need to doubt it.》

After saying that, the firedrake looked away from me and focused on the four youths one after the other.
Miguel is glaring back as a bluff, Eremia and Donna cast down their eyes, and Beck has closed his eyes to better endure the dread.

《Fumu. I can’t sense an evil presence from any of you.
The name〈Yatagarasu〉appeared, so I thought you were the same as those people, but

maybe you are from somewhere else…..?》

The firedrake mumbled and went silent to ponder.

But in those words, there was a surprising detail.

“Firedrake, you know about〈Yatagarasu〉?”

After I asked back like that, the firedrake said while observing my expression.

《……you don’t look like you are feigning ignorance.
Of course, I can’t say that I can perfectly read the expression of someone of a different race either.》

“What Ed said is true.
If I testify like this, then the wise firedrake-sama should be aware of what that means, right?”

The firedrake let out its voice while digesting Melby’s words.

《——Fairies don’t lie, was it.
I can’t doubt the words of the small one, but the truth of the situation can’t be concluded by whether it’s a lie or not.
There are people that cleverly deceive others without telling any lies.》

“You are very cautious, huh.
Even when you have overwhelming power at your disposal.”

《……you who is accompanied by a fairy.
We have enough reason to doubt.
If you want to clear my doubts, then accept my【Appraise】.》

“…..very well.
However, please keep the information about my Status to yourself.
Also, **you will let me take a look too, right?**“

《Hooh. You can not only repel it, but even use it yourself, you say.
Very well, do as you will.》

The firedrake and I use【Appraise】on each other.
Hidden behind me, Melby also uses【Appraise】on the firedrake.

——Gurururo!

《This is……!》

The firedrake, who apparently had successfully taken a look at my Status is shocked, but first, let’s take a look at the result of my【Appraise】.

《Agnia Eigelnheim(《Scorching Dragon》,《Master of the East Ridge》〔of Vulcano Peak〕)
Age 566 years old
Level 111
HP 33997/33997
MP 2692/2852

Abilities
Flame Breath ★★★★★
Acid Spray ★★★★★
Flight ★★★★★
〔Passive〕 Detoxification ★★★★★
〔Passive〕 Strong Immunity ★★★★★
〔Passive〕 Regeneration ★★★★★

Skills
・Legendary Class
【Spirit Magic】6
【Appraise】5
【Telepathic Communication】5
【Protect】3

・Master Class
【Dragon Language Invocation】9(MAX)
【Breath Magic】9(MAX)
【Howl】9(MAX)
【Dragon Fighting Techniques】9(MAX)
【Flying Combat】9(MAX)
【Fire Elemental Magic】7
【Toughness】5
【Object Moulding】5
【Discern】4
【Mana Control】2
【Mana Detection】2
【Physical Magic】2
【Mental Toughness】2
【Healing Magic】2

・General
【Fire Magic】9(MAX)
【Mana Perception】9(MAX)
【Farsight】9(MAX)
【Dragon Scale Defense】9(MAX)
【Dragon Claw Techniques】9(MAX)
【Dragon Limb Combat】9(MAX)
【Night Vision】9(MAX)
【Intimidation】5

【Earth Magic】4
【Command】4

《Attention of the Fire Spirit》

《Blessing of the Dragon God》（Blessing of the Dragon God, Shutrabilm. Medium supplement to the acquisition and learning speed of Skills related to dragons. Medium supplement to the growth of abilities.）

》

I'm the one who wants to be shocked.

The reason why we couldn't interfere with the Breath before was because the firedrake's【Spirit Magic】Skill is higher level than mine or Melby's.
We could interfere with the breath that happened right after we fell to the bottom of the chasm, but the second breath that served as a warning was probably modified in some way with【Spirit Magic】so we couldn't interfere with it.

《I see it now. You were Atrazenec-sama's apostle.》

'Oi, don't spoil it!', is what I was thinking, but it seems the other four didn't hear it.

"*It seems she is relaying the*【*Telepathic Communication*】*through*【*Spirit Magic*】*.*"

Melby explained it to me like this.
I see. That way you can send your voice to even those that haven't learned【Telepathic Communication】.

《Atrazenec-sama's apostle is together with a religious organization that worships the Evil God?
I imagine you have probably infiltrated it.》

"*Something like that.*"

I also start talking with【Telepathic Communication】.
Since I was able to confirm that the firedrake also has【Telepathic Communication】.

"*This firedrake-san is not an evil being.*
It can see me too and looking at it with【Fairy's Eyes】she has pure soul."

If Melby says that much, then it's probably alright to trust her.

"*These children have been abducted from various places by*〈*Yatagarasu*〉*.*
Then in the Crow's Nest —— in the headquarters of〈*Yatagarasu*〉*they underwent a brainwashing education and were made to swear their loyalty to the organization.*
Currently I'm trying to undo their brainwashing while accompanying them.
Of course, I don't plan on letting〈*Yatagarasu*〉*exist either.*"

I briefly explain our situation to the firedrake Agnia.

《…..fumu》

The firedrake thoughtfully nodded, then turned to all of us and said.

《——In that case, I should tell you about it.
There were some people that were trying to abduct this offspring of mine.
Also, in some of their Statuses it was shown that they were members of〈Yatagarasu〉.》

“It can’t be!”

Judging from how Eremia said this, it seems this time she said it so everyone could hear it.

This combination of【Telepathic Communication】and【Spirit Magic】is extremely useful.

One doesn’t have to be a dragon to use it, all you need is【Telepathic Communication】and【Spirit Magic】, so Melby and I can also learn to do it if we practice.
When we get back to the Nest it’s special training time with Melby.

“Perhaps……the reason why your child has learned【Stealthy Steps】was because of that?”

I thought it was because it was targeted by humans that it learned to hide its presence, but

《No, this offspring of mine liked hide and seek from the beginning.
Although it’s rare for a dragon, it seems he has an aptitude to hide his presence and sense others.
In turn, he is weak with Breath in spite of being a dragon.》

Saying that the firedrake smiled bitterly (I think).
There was a gentle light in the gaze of Agnia as she looked at her child beside her.

But even with a Breath that powerful, it’s still classified as being bad at it among the firedrakes, huh.
In exchange for that, this offspring dragon has the talent to become a scout, if it can erase its presence with the huge body of his and get in close proximity, then it’s many time more problematic for humans than a normal firedrake.

“Even so, there are some daredevils that try to attack you, huh?”

《I thought the same.
However, those humans all had outstanding abilities.
It would have been dangerous for this offspring of mine alone.
After I hastened there and brought down few of the humans they retreated very skillfully.》

“Among those, was there a man named Gazaine?”

《Gazaine……I don’t recall.
It wasn’t a fight where I had the time to memorise the results of【Appraise】.

There was even a devil user amongst them.》

“Devil user?”

《Umu. I have lived for a long time, but this is the first time I’ve seen one too.
Judging by how he was using multiple medium level devils from the north pole, he must be quite a powerful practitioner.
I don’t think that was his full power either.》

Does that mean that he had energy to spare even when going up against the over 500 years old firedrake, Agnia?

“What about the others?”

《There were a few people with member of〈Yatagarasu〉written on their statuses and I’ve killed about half of them.

Among them there was one that had abilities that stood out from the rest of them, maybe that was that Gazaine you were asking about.
Other than that, there were a few black robed mages that looked like followers of the devil user.
They were also outstanding mages by human standards, but they failed to defend against my Breath, so about half of them died too after all.
Also, other than the few medium level devils that were summoned by the devil user——there were a few hard to explain ones.》

“Hard to explain ones……?”

《How do I say it, they had an abnormal presence.
They gave off a presence different from monsters or people.》

“Didn’t you【Appraise】them?”

《Of course I did.
But, the result of【Appraise】was entire illegible.》

“Huh….? The result of【Appraise】, illegible?”

《As you also possess the【Appraise】Skill you probably know, but【Appraise】is when you send a faint amount of mana with detection purposes, called ‘ping’, towards the internal mana of the target, and by analysing the response from that you make conjectures about the information of the target.
The precision and depth of this analysis and conjecture rise together with the Skill level.》

Hooh, so that’s how it worked.
So then, I thought it didn’t use any MP, but it turns out it just uses a ‘faint amount of mana’, huh.
I guess then, when that mana gets noticed by【Mana Perception】or【Mana Detection】is

when the【Appraise】gets exposed.

《However, on those hard to explain ones the analysis and conjecture didn't work at all.
The Status screen was filled with garbage information, and even that was changing with the passage of time.
I haven't seen a being like that so far in my entire life.》

Indeed, you can only describe that as 'hard to explain'.

"Were those ones strong?"

《No, I didn't fight with those ones that much.
But, from crossing my claws with them I don't think they are that strong.
Of course the other ones that were there were considerably skillful, so only compared to them.
That's right, you, who is accompanied by a fairy, if it was you, you could win against them, even if it wouldn't be an easy victory.》

Unexpectedly weak…..maybe.
If we look at it in light of the standards of this world, then to a normal soldier or adventurer it would be a dangerous opponent, so I think it's fairly strong…..
Nnn, they are really hard grasp.

"If that's the case than does that mean that the ones who attacked your child was a group of 15 or 16?
A few〈Yatagarasu〉emissaries, the devil user and his followers, few of the hard to explain guys.
You said that those people tried to abduct your child, then got half destroyed by your counterattack, then retreated.
When did this happen?"

《It will soon be about month ago now.
After that attack I brought this offspring of mine and left our nest at the ridge and started looking for another place suitable for a new nest.
And so, this was the place where we arrived at, but—— to think that it was right next to where the headquarters of those people was, I can't help but feel the irony of fate.
The proverb that says that the God of Fate is a cynical being might perhaps be the truth.》

The firedrake Agnia lets out a sound.
She is probably laughing, but when this huge body that we have to look up at lets out a sound like that it doesn't sound like it's done by a living being.
Donna even flinched.

"Does that mean that you gave up your nest?"

《Is there something strange about that?
We are a race that soars in the sky.
We create transient nests, but as opposed to humans, we are not tied to a plot of land.

If it becomes hard to live somewhere, then we just change or residence to somewhere else.
There is no need to voluntarily keep living in a bug infested house, right?》

I see. So they don't even really care about those people.

《Then again, there are humans that revere us.
They are our dependents that, in exchange for our protection, serve us in minute matters that aren't fit for the claws of dragons.
If those people don't give up on abducting this offspring of mine, then the ones that danger will first befall upon will be our dependents that serve us.
There is also such a reason for our departure from the East Ridge.》

"Won't your dependents think that they were abandoned?"

《When the nest settled, I planned on sending this offspring of mine.
These days they are most likely busy with preparing for the migration.
——Incidentally,》

Agnia turned his black eyes towards Miguel.

"Eh? M-me?"

Miguel is flustered, but even I was caught by surprise by this.

《You are a descendant of my dependents, the Zkornash people, right?
So why are you then a dog for a heinous organization like〈Yatagarasu〉?》

"Wha-….eh?"

《——Answer.》

"Kh….wh-what the hell, all of a sudden!
Don't look down of〈Yatagarasu〉!
I'm a Holy Emissary serving the Evil God-sama!
I heard that those Zkornash people chased my mom away anyway!"

Miguel answers with a red face.

As I thought——it was true, huh.

Miguel's full name is Miguel **Mittelt**.
He got his family name from the middle name of Scarlet, Moria Mittelt Zkornash, who I met in the Adventurer's Guild in Fauno City.
Also, Moria-san said that she is looking for her son, called **Miguel**.
With all those conditions being fulfilled, I thought it was impossible that it would be someone else with the same family and given name.

《Your mother was exiled——I see, your mother is that red haired twin sword user.》

“Wha-…..You know my mother!?”

《Your mother was exiled after committing a taboo of my dependents.
I don’t understand it, but I hear that beings that herd together have laws and systems that serve to protect the herd.
It’s unfortunate, but nothing can be done about it.
In fact, the ones that hated your mother was a portion of the priests, others liked her dearly.
Your mother——her name was Moria, I think.
Moria was an excellent warrior, so much so that she was tasked with guarding this offspring of mine.
Members of the herd tried to get Moria to stay, but Moria herself accepted the proof of her sin and decided to leave the herd.
I was greeted by her before she left the herd.
She was holding a newborn baby in her arms that time.
》

“Was that……”

Donna let her voice out.

《It was most likely you, red haired young boy.》

I never wouldn’t have thought that the firedrake and Miguel’s mother knew each other.

In that case, I can’t keep that to myself either.

“Miguel, I have met your mom too.”

Hearing my words, Miguel looks at me surprised.

“Or rather, it seems that Moria-san partnered up with my mom and they were working as adventurers.
Moria-san said even now, that it’s her fault that Miguel disappeared.
She is searching for Miguel even now.
When I was abducted from Fauno City, Moria-san was also there in Fauno City.”

“Mom was……she was there that time, huh……”

When the mansion of Viscount Chrebl in Fauno City was attacked, the youth group was also there.
In other words, at that time, Moria-san and Miguel were in the same town.

《If your mission as an emissary is more important than your bond with your mother, then I won’t say anything.
However, your mother, even when she was branded as a criminal, she always faced her sin head on.
I don’t think that you, who has the blood of Zkornash in you, couldn’t do the same.》

The firedrake, Agnia, said this and she sent a meaningful gaze at me.
I get it now, she knew about his brainwashing, so she tried to shake things up from her position as a third party that knows about Miguel's past.
As expected of someone that lived more than 500 years, she is quick witted.

《——Well then, with all these circumstances it turns out this place wasn't a suitable place for a nest either.》

"…..are you going away?"

《If you say that〈Yatagarasu〉is the enemy of Atrazenec-sama, then how about I burn down the den of those people? Crow's Nest, you called it?》

The one who reacted to the firedrake's words was Donna.
Donna stepped forward in front of us and shouted with both her arms spread out.

"You, you can't! Everyone is still there!"

《However, those are the comrades of the people that tried to abduct this offspring of mine?
You can't really blame me if I decided to incinerate them to exact our revenge, right?》

"Th-that was…… they probably had some kind of reason for that!"

《Young girl of the beast people, then I ask you, what kind of reason could they possible have to be forgiven for trying to take away this innocent offspring of mine by force?》

"Uh…..that is……"

Eremia stepped forward to switch with Donna, who was at a loss for words.

"——Evil God-sama, at times, orders us to do some things that seem evil at first sight.
However, that must be because of deep, special circumstances.
Firedrake-sama, please, would you believe in those special circumstances of Evil God-sama?"

《Who would believe that nonsense other than you people?
To begin with, if you say that people that are doing something that looks evil at first sight are not evil, then that means there is no evil in this world.
There are some cases where the outward appearance masks someone's true nature, but in general, it's normally accepted that an evil appearance is the result of an evil true nature, right?》

"B-but….Evil God-sama….."

《Why is there a need to treat that Evil God as the only exception to this?
If there is a logical reason for that, then try and say it.
The Evil God is an existence that has given power to countless evil people and monsters and

oppressed good people.
On what basis is he worthy of your faith?》

“Th-that is……”

Eremia is biting her lips, looking vexed.

《——If you don’t have a basis which is enough to persuade me, then it’s just a waste of time.
I will burn down that Nest of yours and make this place our new dwelling place.》

“Even if you don’t do that, we could all get along——”

Donna says, almost crying, but

《Get along, you say? How could we get along with the people that tried to abduct this offspring of mine?
My nest and the Crow’s Nest is mutually exclusive.
Furthermore, since 〈Yatagarasu〉 is worshiping the Evil God, Monguenes, as someone who has received the Blessing of Dragon God-sama, I have to burn that place down after all.》

“U, uu….but….*sniff*“

Donna started genuinely crying.

There, the firedrake sent me a meaningful gaze.

——It seems that’s really what she intends to do.
How quick witted is this dragon, really.

“——Could you wait a moment, firedrake Agnia.
Our comrades are still in 〈Yatagarasu〉.
When I say comrades, I don’t mean all of the emissaries.
Some of those fools that tried to abduct your child are probably mixed in there as well, but there are also those who are just children that believe in the teachings of the religious organization.
If you burn those children as well, then it will be you who committed evil this time.
The parents of those children will resent you.
Even if they were just kidnapped by 〈Yatagarasu〉 and they just happened to be in the Nest by chance.”

《——I see.
You say that a parent’s love for their offsprings is the same for both dragons and humans.
However, you should be aware.
I can’t stand idle when I know that the beings that tried to harm my offspring are this close by.》

“I understand your feelings very well.

I too was brought to the Nest via kidnapping.
My parents are probably worried sick right about now.
No, it probably won't end up with just that.
Dad and mom are probably looking for me desperately.
So, I can imagine how you feel, even if not completely."

《Then what do you suggest?》

"——I will catch those who tried to kidnap your child with my own hands.
Then I will expose their backgrounds and deal with them so they won't be able to lay a finger on your child in the future.
So, would you give us some time?"

《Fumu…..
Ordinarily, I wouldn't even consider what you say, but they are words from someone that is accompanied by a fairy.
Also, uncovering their backgrounds and bringing those who perform despicable acts behind the scenes in〈Yatagarasu〉into the light is something I can't do as someone who is not a human.
——Very well.
I will leave this matter in your hands, ——Edgar Chrebl.》

Saying that, the firedrake squinted one of her eyes.
A wink, maybe.

Yes, this series of exchanges was done in accordance with a scenario which me and the firedrake has cooked up, a type of theatrical play.

Agnia is thinking that if〈Yatagarasu〉will be crushed without fail, then it doesn't matter if she is the one doing it, or she leaves it to me.
Burning down the Nest is certainly a method that is the least troublesome, but there is a chance of letting those emissaries slip through that aren't currently in the Nest.
As a result, there is an undeniable chance that a part of the top brass would survive and rebuild the organization.
In that regard, it's a much more reliable way to「crush」〈Yatagarasu〉for certain if I, a human, do it after a secret investigation.

Furthermore, Agnia understood my aim of trying to undo their brainwashing, so she vividly pointed out the outward characteristics of〈Yatagarasu〉to those four from a third party's point of view.
That was something I couldn't really do from my position.
No, if the「third party」was a simple human, then it would've probably been denied with the good old 'deceived by the devil' excuse.
However, Agnia is an over 500 years old firedrake, whose power the four of them experienced first hand.
There aren't many who are better suited to be the「third party」in regards to objectivity.

Well then, let's finish this theatrical play.
"——I understand, firedrake Agnia.
On the name of my great ancestor Chrebl, I will not break my word."

《Umu.
Then farewell, humans.
Oh dear, I have to start making another nest again now.》

Agnia turned her head all the way up and breathed in deeply.
The high-pitched voices of the fire spirits sweeped over the nesting place of the dragons.

Agnia released a Breath right above.
After the flash of light, that we saw many times already today, lessened and we opened our eyes that were prickling with pain and looked up, we could see the blue sky and the sun.

The firedrake and her child greatly bent their wings, then raised their large bodies up from the ground.
Since we didn't have anything to say to each other anymore, Agnia soared high into the sky and the offspring dragon followed her.

The offspring dragon at the end glared at me and made a「Gugyaa！」sound.
I more or less know what he wanted to say.
'I'll remember this!', something like this.
As my reply I lightly took a fighting pose.
When he saw this, the offspring dragon let out a humph through his nose, flapped his wings and followed after Agnia.

The four from the youth group were left behind at the bottom of the firedrake's dwelling place with their eyes cast down, some had a mortified, some a meek expression.

"*Haaa~. I had no idea what would happen for a time there.*"

"*Yeah, for sure.*"

As I was replying to Melby with【Telepathic Communication】, I let out a sigh even though I couldn't possible be tired.

| TOC |

47. Medicine Master

It was approximately 1 hour after the firedrake Agnia flew away with her child.
In regards to the events that had transpired here, I informed the four children (Miguel, Elemia, Donna, Beck) of what was okay to reveal and what I'd like them to stay quiet about, and after I received their assent, we returned to the surface.

Because the firedrake Agnia's breath attack had opened a large hole inside the lair, we were able to return straight to the surface using the grappling hook.
I was fine of course, and the other four managed to ascend the rope without difficulty at least.

As I was finally scaling up the rope, using [Psychokinesis] to roll it up as I went, a sand-coloured figure jumped out from behind the cover of some rocks a short distance away.

"Oi~!"

He wore a mask so I couldn't see his face, but judging from the voice, it's probably Gonzack.
Gonzack reached us after I had stored the grappling hook in my rucksack (or pretended to do so while having Melby put it in the dimension storage).

"Are you okay, Fellow believer Orochi!"

"Yeah, somehow."

"When I saw that breath attack just now, I was certain that you guys had died."

Gonzack said, patting his chest in relief.

After I explained the details to him, we took a rest there since the threat was gone.
As we rest, the emissaries of <Yatagarasu> surround us, dismantling several wyverns that they had killed.
Wyvern flesh is tough on it's own, but not only can the flavour be easily brought out when cooked well, it's possible to preserve it for a long time if we smoke it, so it can be used as a valuable source of protein for <Yatagarasu> without wasting any of it.
Apparently, their hide, teeth, claws, and bones also have their respective uses.

For some reason, our leader showed up as we rested and were drinking the water that Gonzack had supplied.

"I rushed over when I heard that a firedrake appeared but…… it looks like I came for nothing."

Certainly, there was a limited number of people within the fighting force of the Nest who might be able to contend with a firedrake, so Gazaine's arrival wasn't that strange.
Gazaine used a hand to direct the children who were attempting to salute him in a hurry with the exception of me, and then says,

"You guys did well coming back safely.
Good grief, a firedrake residing beside our Nest is no joke.
At such an important time……"

As he grumbles, Gazaine calls out to the four children one by one.

"Elemia, I heard you were the first to discover the firedrake.
You did a good job in your role as scout.
Miguel, apparently the one who proposed that you should investigate the firedrake's lair was you.
Good decision.
Donna, as the healer of the team, as well as the oldest member, well done in restraining your fellow believers.
Beck, it seems you risked your life as the tank, and protected everyone.
You endured as the firedrake's opponent nicely without faltering."

Each of them should have erred as well, but it seems he was praising their good points and thanking the four for their efforts for the time being.
He's more conscientious than he appears.

Finally, Gazaine looks at me.

"……Well, I didn't think you would die to something of that level."

"Oi, worry properly."

"If I was worried, you'd say that it's disgusting anyway.
But seriously, thanks for bringing these guys back all alive.
Tell me one of your wishes or something.
I'll see to it as best I can."

"Then, teach me [Pharmacy]……"

"I can't.
I've already told you that often though."

"Tch. Well then…… right, send the best parts of the wyvern meat to the children's group."

"Are you alright with that?"

"Yeah. It's not like I have anything I want in particular."

"Hmm…… In that case, I'll give you the wyvern wings and a stack of milk coupons. Split it as you wish."

Oh, how generous.
Somehow it seems like Gazaine is currently in quite a good mood.
He appeared to be happy about our return, but did this guy have such an admirable

personality?

While I was wracking my brain, it was decided at Gazaine's command that we would hold a barbecue to commemorate the victory against the firedrake (?) before we return to the Nest.

The wyverns' thick meat was roasted on wire netting, turning into steak.
It was seasoned roughly with rock salt, but it tasted super delicious since we were eating it after such an intense workout.

Huh, speaking of which……

"Where's Fellow believer Nebil?"

Nebil, the supposed leader of the wyvern subjugation troops, was nowhere to be found.
I feels bad if I don't report to my superior after finishing a job, thanks to a habit formed back when I was an office worker.

No way, could he have been done in by the wyverns……?

Gazaine answered my question with a sour look.

"Ah, him.
Apparently he said something about unceasing hiccups or something and was taken to the infirmary but……
The firedrake appeared and surprised him so much that he became unable to stop hiccupping, something like that?
I've never heard such a thing before…… When he's recovered, I'll have to discipline him."

"I-I see."

I know too much about the cause of the hiccups.
Stealthily, I retrieve the Ususake Mushroom that Donna shared with me and use [Appraisal] on it.
《Ususake Mushroom: A tasty mushroom with the characteristic of being able to be thinly teared. However, consuming large amounts will cause unstoppable hiccups. Hiccups will continue for approximately half a day, but without after-effects. When dried and turned into fine powder and ignited, it will explode with an intense noise.》

Sorry, Fellow believer Nebil.

While I, alone, was praying for Fellow believer Nebil's happiness in the next world (not dead), a singing competition started in the barbecue grounds.
Elemia was playing the flute, Gonzack strummed a guitar-like instrument, and Miguel beat the drums.
The one singing was Gazaine for some reason.
He had quite a beautiful sombre voice and was enthusiastically singing a melancholic song that sounded like a folk song with a solid tremolo.

——Looking at this scene, they seem to be a rather pleasant bunch.

◇◆◇◆◇◆◇◆

That night, I visited a certain person.
The person resided in an exclusive underground space in a section deep within the Nest.

I opened up a duct in the darkness of the cave with the rail cars, then erased my presence with [Espionage Techniques] as I slipped into the underground space where that person lived.

From the direction of a living room-esque room, the sound of something being grinded could be heard.

As I was standing at the door of that living room, hesitating to knock,

"……Who's there?"

"……!"

A voice from beyond the door called out to me first.

"From the size of that presence, let's see, is it the baby who joined recently?"

Since couldn't do anything after that much was exposed, I resolve myself and open the door.

An old man was sitting cross-legged, hunched over the medicine producing tool spread out in front of a sunken hearth.
The elder, clad in a kimono that resembled the casual wear from my previous life, had white hair and lots of wrinkles and kept his eyes closed even when I opened the door.
The dog ears that grew out as if to cover his white hair were exactly like those of a girl I know well.

"How long are you going to stand around for?
It's cold. Sit down by the hearth."

Being told that, I sit down opposite the old man.
Then, I stealthily use [Appraisal] on him.
I deliberately weaken the magic ping that the firedrake Agnia explained about, so that it became even harder for my [Appraisal] to be exposed.

«Ganash Yashbarl («Medicine Master» | «Medicine Saint» | «Elder»)
Age 73 Years
Beastkin (Moon Dog Tribe)

Level 24
HP 29/29

MP 33/33

Skills
Legendary
[Super Tactility] —
[Super Hearing] —
[Super Smell] —
[Microscopic Vision] 2

Master Class
[Microscopic Observation] 9 (MAX)
[Sense Presence] 8
[Mana Detection] 7

General
[Mana Perception] 9 (MAX)
[Pharmacy] 9 (MAX)
[Eavesdropping] 9 (MAX)
[Tool Creation] 9 (MAX)
[Light Magic] 5
[Medical Care] 4
[Mana Manipulation] 3
[Telekinesis Magic] 2

«Attention of the Medical God» (Gained the attention of the God of Medicine, Norius. Small supplement to the acquisition | growth of skills in the [Pharmacy] system.) »

While I was looking at his status, the old man ladled out a cup of hot water from the iron kettle hanging above the hearth, then transferred it to a teacup and passed it to me.

"I'm out of tea.
If you're fine with boiled water, go ahead and drink."

"Thank you, I will partake."

I moved to take the teacup, but the teacup the old man was holding moved and I was unable to receive it smoothly.

"By any chance… are your eyes…?"

"Oh, that's right. I am blind."

"……I'm sorry."

I asked without thinking, but that was probably bad mannered of me.

As I was feeling ashamed, Old Man Ganash gave me a small nod.

"No, it's not all bad.
In exchange for my blindness, my other senses have sharpened.
I've even become able to see both mana, and people's presences.
Everything is thanks to the guidance of the goddess of samsara who governs skills.
That said, the only thing I can't distinguish is colour, but there's no inconvenience apart from that."

"Is that so…… Colours are something that can't be seen without light."

"Hm? Colours and light…… Do those two have some connection?"

"Connection you say…… Ah, I see."

The information of how colours are determined by some aspect of light being reflected off objects was a premise in modern science.

"Colours are light.
Light hits something and is reflected.
At that time, a portion of the light is absorbed by the object.
For example, red objects reflect red light and absorbs all the other light."

There might be a problem with me carelessly showing off knowledge from my previous life, but there shouldn't be any harm if it's just this much.
This world should also have prisms at least, so researchers of this principle may know of it.
Presenting my knowledge is the easiest way to obtain the trust of this person is what Donna said.

"Hoho…… It makes sense.
In that case, if I combine [Light Magic] and [Mana Detection]——Oh……!"

Old Man Ganash raised his eyebrows in surprise.

"I can see…… No, I should say I can tell.
I can tell that this light, which I only understood as bright and dark until now, is composed of various 'colours'…..!
Oh…..Oh!"

Old Man Ganash was shedding tears from his eyes in amazement, but the amazed one is me.
This grandpa instantly understood the mechanics of light and was able to apply it to magic just from the trifling bit of modern knowledge I spoke of.

"Certainly, I never thought I would be able to regain 'colours' at this age…… Well, to live and to learn."

"No, half of that was your own ability.
By the way, how should I address you?"

"Oh, come to think of it, I never gave my name.

You seem to be aware, but I am Ganash.
It's fine to call me gramps too."

Even if you say that, I can't really call you gramps.

"Then, I'll use Grandpa Ganash.
As for me, everyone calls me Orochi.
Today, I've come because I'd like to seek your guidance."

"Right, Orochi.
As thanks for conferring upon me 'colours', I'll do anything for you as long as it's within my capabilities."

"Going straight to the point, can I ask you to teach me [Herbalism]?"

"Ohoh…… Where did you get wind of [Herbalism]?"

"It's because I became well acquainted with your granddaughter."

"Oh, is that so.
It seems she was in your care during the firedrake strife the other day."

"In regards to those events, it was mutual."

I shrugged my shoulders.

"Isn't she a good girl.
She's not a girl who should be made to play assassin and such in a place like this."

"Oi, oi……. Is it alright to say that?"

"What, I don't care if you're the one I'm addressing.
Since you're a rebel emissary who sneaked into my place late at night like this, without permission from the higher ups."

That's true.

"More than that, I was told by the leader to never teach you how to handle drugs."

Wow.
That Gazaine, he even considered the possibility of me doing this and beat me to the punch.

"But, why would that guy be afraid of such a thing?
Even though he said he would teach me other combat abilities without restraint."

When I grumble, Grandpa Ganash nodded in deep thought.

"Mn. I see…… So you don't understand it."

"……What does that mean?"

"When it comes to assassination, do you know what the most challenging thing is?"

Cocking my head at the question that came flying suddenly,

"It's approaching without notice, right?"

"That's also difficult for certain, but for emissaries who have received training in <Yatagarasu> and gained experience, that's not something that would be a problem.
Naturally, this is when the opposition doesn't have people who can read presences or detect mana.
What I'm talking about is something more direct."

"Direct……?"

"Let me give you an example.
You and Gazaine——no, the conditions are bad with him… If you were to plan to assassinate the other executives of <Yatagarasu>."

"That's a suspicious example."

"It's just hypothetical.
I'm not saying to do it.
Then again, I don't intend to tell you not to do it."

Grandpa Ganash's lips curve into a broad grin.

"And so, what were we talking about… That's right, assassination.
Since you've been cutting in, we've been getting side-tracked."

"Uh…… Sorry."

"Well, it's fine.
Anyway, trying to assassinate the higher ups.
There's probably no problem with getting closer.
Since you have the ability to stealthily sneak here to my retreat like this.
However, when it comes time to kill, what would be the hindrance?"

"Hindrance….
For me, I plan to bury them alive without further parley but……"

"That's no good.
Consider killing them with the [Assassination Techniques] learned in <Yatagarasu>."

"With [Assassination Techniques]……?
But since it's the top brass of <Yatagarasu>, every one of them would be high levelled so——
Oh, I see! I might not be able to kill them in one go!"

"Indeed. The biggest difficulty in regards to assassination is the target's HP."

If their HP is high, even if the amount of damage incurred is the same, the degree of injury would be relatively light.
This is something I learnt firsthand when I tumbled down from the second storey and hit my head in the estate in Corbette Village.

That being the case, if the assassination target's HP is high then no matter how many times I attack their vitals with [Assassination Techniques], it's possible that I will be unable to take their life in one hit.
And if the other party were cause a commotion there, the assassination might end in a failure.

"You will attempt to assassinate the top brass of the organisation that has Gazaine as their leader.
The difficulty level of the assassination will vary depending on whether or not you possess drugs at that time."

I see. No wonder they don't want to teach me [Pharmacy].

"Then what will you do?
Will you really not teach me?"

"I will certainly teach you.
Not only did you return colours to me, you are my granddaughter's benefactor.
In addition——"

"In addition?"

"If it's something Gazaine hates, I will do anything."

Muttering that, Grandpa Ganash furrows his brows in a grimace.

"……What happened between Gazaine and you?"

"Gazaine killed my daughter.
When he was kidnapping Donna, that guy killed my daughter to seal her lips.
Then he carried Donna off, training her into an assassin, and also had me help with poison making by holding Donna hostage."

"……Is that so."

Silence descended upon Ganash's living room ("retreat" according to him).

"……Anyway, if you want to learn how to handle drugs then I'll teach you all I know.
However, how much you can do with that will depend on yourself.
Even so, I will surely impart upon you the knowledge and techniques needed to avoid being taken advantage of by them.

I'll also include knowledge of the 'underground' drugs that I have yet to teach Donna."

"That would be appreciated.
Let me work hard to live up to your expectations.
……Incidentally, there's just one thing I'd like to ask first."

"Oh? A question right off the bat, huh.
That's a good thing, half of what you can't imagine with that mind of yours, I cannot comprehend either."

"It's about countermeasures against poisons that induce abnormal conditions such as sleep, paralysis and poisoned, starting with Repchipa Grass."

"How specific.
I suppose this is about how they used Repchipa Grass to abduct you."

"…….Something like that."

Repchipa Grass wasn't effective on me, but if that wasn't used then there would have been no need to be obediently abducted by Gazaine.
Although, since it doesn't seem like I would have been able to compete with Gazaine and win back then, it was also as if it was a narrow escape from death instead.
It's frustrating, but misreading both our capabilities was because I wouldn't be able to win no matter how much time passed.

"Basically, you're talking about recovering from abnormal conditions caused by drugs—in other words, those not caused by magic—by means of using drugs that counteract those poisons.
Of course, it only works if there's corresponding medicine, but you should remember that this world also has poisons without medicine."

"Oi, oi, then is it the end when those poisons are used?"

Well, the poisons from my former world were also like that though…….

"I heard that there are also spells among the [Recovery Magic] used by high-ranking clergymen that have an effect on poison, but even for magic, you can't engage with it if you don't know what kind of poison it is.
That said, fortunately there are very few poisons I don't know of, and I am able to make antidotes for almost all of the poisons I do know of.
This is something that can be done when you combine not only my power, but the power of the medicine god, and the skills received from the goddess of reincarnation."

"So it's impossible for me?"

"There's no need to be so disappointed.
90% of the poisons that can be used in the world are limited to the 6 most convenient varieties of poison.

For the time being, you will be fine if you reach the point where you can make antidotes for these 6——no, the 3 varieties of poison used most often above the others.
In addition to this, you'll learn about the unique poisons used in <Yatagarasu> and the detoxification methods for them."

"All of that sounds interesting, but I guess there isn't anything like an elixir."

"It's not…… like there isn't.
However, things like that require rare ingredients.
For example——That's right, rainbow cactus sap and such, there's no way you'd have any."

"Rainbow……cactus?"

I stiffened at Grandpa Ganash's words.

"……Grandpa Ganash, what you see from this point, I'd like you to keep a secret but……"

"It's a bit late. Just meeting you like this would be bad if it were known."

"……Melby."

When I call out, Melby shows herself.

"Medicine Master-sama.
I am the fairy Melby.
I am travelling with Ed for reasons."

"Oh…… I've had some suspicions since some time ago, but it was indeed a fairy there."

"So you noticed."

In exchange for being blind, his other five senses and perception of mana was really sharpened.

Requesting Melby, I had her retrieve the cactus in question—the rainbow cactus pot plant—from the dimension storage.

"I don't know whether you can see it but there is a rainbow cactus pot plant here."

"Ooh! Is that true! Then the sap also——"

In response to Grandpa Ganash leaning forward in astonishment,

"You can't! Because it was decided that I would raise Tushaaravati-chan!"

"Well, he hasn't said anything yet."

I retort to Melby, who was using her tiny body to cover the potted plant.

Or rather, she even gave it a name before I knew it.
Her big sister nature was fully displayed.
Nevertheless, couldn't you have given it a name that was a little easier to say.
Doesn't that sound like an Indian goddess or something.

Speaking of which, I wonder if the [Appraisal] result will reflect the name in this case.
Having thought of that, I had the sudden impulse to use [Appraisal] on the cactus.

«Tushaaravati
3 years old
Rainbow Cactus? (tree form) / Magic Organism
Level 1
HP 3/3
MP 262/262

Skills
Legendary
[Growth Control] —
([Dimension Magic] 1) (Inapplicable in tree form)
([Aurora Magic] 1) (Inapplicable in tree form)»

……Yeah.
Let's pretend I didn't see it.
This is an ordinary cactus. There's no mistake.

No, all jokes aside, just what happened to this cactus in the short time I didn't see it.
No matter what, to have [Appraisal]-san use a ? in the explanation I had great faith in meant it had gone through an incomprehensible evolution.
Perhaps Melby putting it in her dimension storage was the cause but…….
To begin with, it was an unusual plant that would absorb mana and bloom flowers in accordance with the attribute absorbed.

"If it's the size where it can be a potted plant then it's a still-young specimen.
If you extract the flower nectar of a matured specimen, it can be used as a substitute for the sap.
In that case, you'll be able to acquire the ingredients for an elixir without hurting it."

"If so, shall I sneak out some other time and try searching for the place from the other day?"

"Good grief, I just keep getting surprised by you.
The refining of the elixir will probably be difficult if it's not me.
You can bring it over when you obtain the ingredients."

"Understood. Putting that aside, teach me [Herbalism] as well."

"Of course."

Hearing Grandpa Ganash's words, I stood up from beside the hearth.
At the same time, Grandpa Ganash also stood up and took out a small porcelain bottle from a drawer alongside the wall, holding it out towards me.

"……If you want to know the truth about this religious organisation, you should take this medicine."

"This is?"

"When the large mass with Gazaine's presence is held, take that medicine before entering the chapel."

I thought to use [Appraisal] on it, but it was inside the bottle so only «〔Porcelain〕bottle» was displayed.
Let's look its the contents later.

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